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THE·WANDERING·YEARS

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THE WANDERING YEARS

THE WANDERING YEARS

BY

KATHARINE TYNAN

AUTHOR OF "TWENTY-FIVE YEARS," "THE MIDDLE YEARS," "THE YEARS OF THE SHADOW"

Hinkson, Katharine Tynan

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TO

HIM WHO MADE HOME FOR ME

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would return safely from the War. The curious reversed writing ran :

" I am not sure, but I believe they are safe. She has protected them with a network of prayer."

One need not believe in such a communication to be comforted by it, and I was comforted, in spite of myself.

Pat had spent all that Summer of 1918 in a persistent effort to get to his own 1st Battalion of the Dublins and the front line. I think he was kept back because of his very youthful appearance. Hearing the tale of these struggles read aloud at the breakfast-table at Brookhill, Lord Linlithgow said : " That fellow will get himself court-martialled if he doesn't look out."

He was attached to a battalion of the Worcesters, repairing the roads behind the advancing army, and they were constantly under shell-fire, but he always wrote that he was safe, and I believed him. A time came when he heard that his battalion of the Dublins was not far away, but he did not know the location. He cast his bread on the waters and went out to look for it. It was a tremendously hot Sunday of that very hot Summer of 1918. He tramped miles along the glaring and shadeless roads, getting no nearer his object, till he was in despair, when a car passed him, at great speed in a cloud of dust, which he recognised by the red flag to be a General's.

To his amazement the car pulled up, and the General himself got out and asked him where he was going. He explained that he was looking for his battalion, and the General—he was Major-General Percy, a name to be kept in grateful remembrance by Pat's mother—said : " Get in and we'll find out where your battalion is located."

Pat, wondering at his own good fortune, got into the car ; the General produced a number of maps and looked up the 1st Dublins. Having discovered where the battalion was, instead of sending Pat on his way, he said : " I am going to a Council of Generals. The car will

take you on. I am very glad to have been of service to you."

Pat, writing of this adventure, ended his letter with: "So there's some good in Staff officers after all."

The letter, with this ending, was read aloud to a gathering of officers, including some on the Staff, in the drawing-room at Brookhill. The Staff officers smiled wryly, but Lord Linlithgow, who was thoroughly irreverent, said: "That fellow should be put in a glass case. He's the first I've ever heard of who had a good word for the Staff."

Pat's experiences were not all so agreeable. Long afterwards we heard the other side. There was a time when his Pioneer battalion pitched their tents on ground just vacated by "Chinks." When the sun shone and the earth grew warm there came up multitudes and multitudes of lice. These kind of minor horrors—in moments of self-forgetfulness the boys would tell things which do not bear repeating in cold print—must have been a spiritual torture of an intense and unendurable kind. The wounds of the spirit must have been at least as terrible as the wounds of the body in the bitter War.

Once Pat walked by moonlight two miles to dine with his beloved "Doc." Dr. Berkeley Robertson was and remains one of his dearest friends: his friends are always much older men than himself. The dead of yesterday's battle, men and horses, lay unburied all the way. I asked him afterwards if he were frightened. "No," he said, "but I was depressed."

The Doc. wrote to me about that time that he had walked eight miles to fetch Pat for the night for the pleasure of walking another eight miles back with him. He reported that Pat, having spent the evening in "putting him wise" on the Irish situation, had repeated Irish poetry to him till he fell asleep in the small hours, when Pat's recitations were growing drowsy.

Our friends were always going away. Lord Linlithgow, who was a brightness in the house, left us

in July, and the R.F.A., going to a Wicklow glen for battery practice, took away Arthur Spence and Alan Blake, two of our special friends, about the same time. But others took their places and there was a perpetual life and bustle about Brookhill. The " trouble " had not begun to be acute, or it had lulled as the threat of conscription was forgotten. Most of the soldiers were extremely open-minded and sympathetic on Irish matters, though we had an occasional passage at arms still. Ireland is very hard to resist. Long afterwards a young officer of the K.O.S.B., who could never forget Bachelor's Walk and was gloomy when Dublin was mentioned, wrote to me from India : " When everything is burnt up and we are gasping with heat and thirst we think of the lovely green fields of Claremorris and long for them."

Apparently he had forgotten the rain and the mud. The rain came that year in September, the month which is called in Ireland " the Poor Man's Harvest." It flooded the Camp and drowned out the tents. The mud must have reminded some of Passchendaele Ridge. It was over the men's high boots, and it was a slough for the horses. We had warned the soldiers when they first came that the field which had been selected for the Camp was full of springs and would be impossible when the rain came; but it had been selected by someone sent down from Dublin, who had not asked for local advice. It was a very pretty field in a golden April when the soldiers came, and they thought they were in Paradise, the tired men from France and the East; but it lay low and the high park of Brookhill drained into it. The horses suffered deplorably. They had no protection from the rain and stood all day and all night in the torrents. Many died of it, and the soldiers were more miserable about the sufferings of the horses than their own.

It rained all through October. The men were always wet. The Wisdom somewhere out of sight and hearing had decreed that the camping season was from May to

October. That Wisdom had never experienced the rain of the West of Ireland Autumn and Winter. Following a lunar rainbow it rained on end for twenty-seven days.

A senior officer complained: "The men don't go sick: I wish they would and then we'd be taken in; but they are going savage." Of course the Wisdom never took cognisance of such trifles.

The drenched men used to dry their sodden clothes in the big laundry at Brookhill and crowd in there when they could, packed like sardines and steaming. It was then I saw the tenderness of the young officers for the men which so impressed me. There was something oddly paternal about it.

In the drawing-room at Brookhill we had such fires as we shall never have again—beautiful glowing fires of turf and wood. There were always, in the afternoons and evenings, half-drowned officers—even the General was drowned out in his tent—coming in, with abject apologies for their muddy boots, to sit down in a circle before the blessed fire. Meanwhile ever and ever the great clouds rolled in from the Atlantic and broke in torrents, and when you could see it for the rain, Croagh Patrick, thirty miles away, was in the next field, and that was the most ominous sign of the weather.

Perhaps even the memory of that rain was grateful to Eric Broadway at Murree.

The Winter opened with festivities and dances. But before that there was the Armistice, the amazing, the incredible thing, so long prayed for and hoped for that when the promise of it came no one believed it. Just before that we had gone up to Dublin for one of our occasional visits.

I remember the afternoon of the day before we went. It was Friday, the 11th of October, 1918. We were sitting in the drawing-room when Captain Frank Butler came in and said: "They've got the mail-boat at last." The *Leinster* had been sunk that morning.

The next day we went up to town. I remember that

we travelled with a couple of American sailors, A.B.'s. There was a third, a petty officer of some kind, but he did not come into the conversation. They were a charming couple. One had been out from Ireland only seven years, and still kept the Irish softness. The other had been born and bred in the States, of Irish parentage. He was very keen on his profession. I don't suppose he remained an A.B. for long. I can still remember the soft, slowly-drawled-out "Ma-'am" with which they addressed me. We became great friends. They were returning to their ship, and since they told us the ship's library was an improving one, with little or nothing outside technical books, we presented them with the magazines and novels we travelled with.

They presented us in return with photographs of their ship, telling us with great good manners how to pronounce its name, which we had pronounced as it was spelt—Arkansas. I have a most pleasant memory of their excellent manners and the high intelligence of the American-born one. He became quietly excited over the discovery that the young officer travelling with us, who was in Signals, was an expert in Wireless, which was his subject. He tried very hard to extract something useful from that young officer, who preserved the stolid remoteness of the English public-school boy. He had had all along the air of not entirely approving our friendship with the sailors. I can still see the intensely curious face, the leaping eyes of the young sailor, fixed on the impassive, very fair face of the Signals officer, who would have broken all his traditions if he had condescended to talk as we were doing.

Although the trouble had not begun acutely in Ireland, no one had forgotten Easter Week 1916, and the youth of Ireland was wearing the Republican colours, even when it was in the service of Government officials. To have his chauffeur wearing the Republican colours was something to which the Resident Magistrate had to turn the blind eye. Once, a temporary chauffeur

informed the family of the Resident Magistrate that he was where he was because he had had to clear out of Dublin after the rising. That was before Sinn Fein had swept the country and set its adherents in all manner of unexpected places, but the adherents were there, because the memory of Easter Week had made and was making many converts, snatching them sometimes out of the most loyal fold.

This is preliminary to saying that the politics of the Americans did not at all commend them to the typically English young officer. They were newly from Westport, and the one who was visiting Ireland for the first time was much more fiercely Irish than the other. To me it was one of many good travelling meetings. I corresponded with the sailors and sent them papers and books till they went home after the Armistice. In their delightful letters they used to address me as "Dear Friend," and end with "Your dutiful and affectionate Friends."

May all good fortune attend them wherever they may be!

CHAPTER II

LAST DAYS AT BROOKHILL

We had a serious purpose in our visit to Dublin in that we had to see a doctor on behalf of our young daughter, who was suspected of some nose trouble. On Monday the 14th October I had an appointment with a specialist in nose and throat disorders, a man of European reputation. We had thought that an operation might be necessary. Let me tell his name. It Sir Robert Woods, one of the Members for Dublin University.

We had spent a busy and happy morning, despite the impending shadow of the visit to the specialist. It was always a delight to get back to Dublin, where we behaved like schoolboys on a holiday, doing all manner of imprudent things in the way of diet. I'm afraid we amazed Fuller's by asking for ice-cream sodas, only to be told sternly that they were "off."

The visit to the specialist was most reassuring. He simply investigated the young lady's nose, remarked, "H'm! If you wanted a trick you might have got a prettier one than sniffing," and dismissed us, refusing a fee because he and her father had been old College friends.

Well, that anxiety was relieved, but we had known that Pat had at last got to his battalion, and that meant the front line in time: the time was, of course, uncertain.

It was not really easy to be happy, even though we had got back to our beloved Dublin. The Shelbourne was dreadful. In the hall, as we arrived on the Saturday evening, we met Lady Esmonde. She was waiting to

find and identify if necessary the body of her husband's cousin, Mr. Tom Esmonde of Ballycourcey, who had been on the *Leinster*. The corridors were full of the unclaimed luggage of those who had gone across for the week-end intending to return. Outside the door of our bedroom, the spacious room of an old-fashioned comfort which we had always claimed when we visited the Shelbourne, was a high pile of luggage, the owner of which had vacated the room just a day earlier. The whole atmosphere of the place seemed full of death.

All day long bereaved relatives in new black were arriving—fathers and mothers, widows and children. The Chestertons were at the hotel. They had had the narrowest escape from being on the *Leinster* that morning. There was a poor lady who had lost all, husband and children, "at one fell swoop." He had been seen last, a one-armed soldier, swimming with his little boy on his shoulder.

There was one of those lost on the *Leinster* who had a certain poignant interest for us. She was a young schoolmistress whom we had known at Claremorris. She was a creature abounding in life and energy. Perhaps she had not known the loneliness and monotony of her life before the coming of the soldiers. The big Camp set down in the midst of the bog country had brought with it something, martial and stirring, that made for unrest. She decided to go out into the world, away from the safe, dull life and its narrow possibilities, and she got a chance as probationer in a Leeds hospital. It was her very first journey out of Mayo. One can imagine the adventure, and the high heart with which she set out. She went aboard the *Leinster* and was never heard of afterwards. In her case the sea did not give up its dead.

The sea was giving up its dead daily and hourly during that week. If we had not been inured to death we could not have borne it. As it was we saw our friends as usual on such visits and visited the theatres. We

lunched and dined—with Sir Horace Plunkett, with Sir John and Lady Ross, with many others. We saw A. E. for a good talk. On the way to see him we met one of the R.F.A. stationed at Claremorris, and took him along. He was in private life a Californian fruit farmer. Khaki had been looked at a bit askance in Dublin since the Rebellion; but in A. E.'s room at Plunkett House were to be met all manner of people, from Sinn Fein leaders to British Generals, with all that might lie between them.

A. E. devoted himself that afternoon to the soldier, who might easily have been overlooked, for there were more important guests. Doubtless he was keenly interested in the fruit farming, probably as much, at least, as in intellectual and political discussion. He made the man in khaki very happy and at home.

Coming back to the hotel one of those evenings from a theatre, to which Cia Esmonde had accompanied us, we met Lady Esmonde in the hall. She had found what she sought. All that week she had been seeing the bodies from the *Leinster* as they came in and were laid in the Morgue. She had lost her son in the Jutland fight. Who shall measure the courage and the generosity of such a woman?

There was a Requiem Mass at Newman's University Chapel next morning. It was celebrated in a side-chapel, where Mr. Esmonde's coffin lay under many wreaths. While we waited for the Mass to begin we watched a wedding which was being celebrated at the High Altar. When it was over the bridal pair came down the centre of the chapel, between the seats, everyone craning their necks to see them—a shy groom, a flushed and rapturous bride. When they had passed we went into the chapel where the drowned man lay for the Requiem Mass. It was a strange meeting between Love and Death.

I had another memory of that beautiful University Chapel. It was of the months following the horrible

disaster of Suvla Bay, when there were so many black-veiled figures at the morning Masses, the mothers and wives of the 10th Irish Division, which had all but perished at Suvla. When they lifted their veils you saw burning eyes, and cheeks that had a feverish flush, as though the poor souls had passed through the fires at Suvla and known the thirst when the wells were impossible.

I remembered how we had just come in from a long day spent with Sir John and Lady Ross, on April 8th, six months earlier, to find a telegram from Pat saying he was coming on leave, as he had been ordered out to France. This time we came from the Opera : there was opera in Dublin and we went on all our disengaged evenings. The Opera was " Trovatore." There was a letter from Pat telling us that he would be in the front line and going over the top within a couple of days.

There was mercifully just one night to think about it, to imagine it. The next morning I was not well and had retired to my room after breakfast, leaving my husband and Pam sitting in the lounge. About half-past ten I came downstairs. As I entered the lounge I was almost knocked over by the hurtling flight of my two, who did not even stop to apologise. I thought they were mad, and stared after them as they fled towards the hotel door. Then I saw a little figure in khaki come in, wearing on its shoulder the red triangle of the 29th Division. It was Pat, safe and well. They had seen the outside car drive up to the door and the young fair-haired officer alight. " It is *like* Pat ! " said Pamela, incredulously. Then they saw that it was Pat.

I don't know that life has had a better hour for me than that. I know that I clean forgot my bilious attack. I remember telling complete strangers that Pat had been over the top and had come home safe, and they were very kind, congratulating me and shaking hands with me. It was unbelievable joy. And a little later there was I sitting on Pat's bed while he shaved, and in

between unpacked his souvenirs, about which he was very keen.

We took him off as soon as possible and had him photographed. I am very glad to have that photograph of Pat, in which the joy breaks over his face. Everyone was making much of him and wanting to hear his story. Frank Butler, of whom we were very fond—a very gay and amusing Irishman—had turned up at the Shelbourne. He had come to Dublin to buy furniture for the rooms at the Claremorris workhouse, upon which the gilded Staff was retiring. Pat, who had never seen him before, was calling him " Frank " in about three minutes, for all his red tabs and his seniority.

We went to see A. E. that afternoon—Pat has always sat at A. E.'s feet—and in the evening we dined with Sir Thomas and Lady Russell, whose only son had been killed in the War. They had a peculiar affection for Pat, and being great-hearted, they rejoiced with us in his safety.

Everyone, as I have said, wanted to hear Pat's story, so I put it down as he told it and sent it in his words to the *Star*, where it appeared a day or two later. Only the soldiers know what the War really looked like, and they do not talk much about it, or they are inarticulate. Indeed, considering the enormous experiences that were thrust upon our simple boys it was amazing how little one got from them. During all that Summer and Winter, when soldiers were incessantly in and out of Brookhill, and we had arrived at intimacy with many of them, we got little or nothing of the reality from their talk. From Pat we got some vivid sidelights, which lit up for a moment a country else dark.

We took him home triumphantly the next day. Never was there so happy a party. We little knew that we should never again go home to Claremorris.

Frank Butler travelled down with us, and the young Signals officer, who was also in charge of the carrier-pigeons. He used to send them off from our hall-door

steps to Achill or Belmullet or other distant spots. He said the pigeons could see an object fifty miles away. They used to gyrate in the air when set free till they saw their objective, and then they were off, without doubt or dismay.

There also travelled down with us an officer of an Indian cavalry regiment, of whom we afterwards saw a good deal. He might have walked out of a book. He was a great sportsman and he had an equally sporting wife. He had shot everything from lions to rabbits. He was then waiting for a passage to "British East," where he hoped to end his days.

He was most amusing to listen to, and if he had had a sense of humour he would have been inimitable. He had his clothes and his guns, his wines and cigars from the best shops in London. He used to tell how when a Savile Row tailor asked him for a reference he would answer: "Ask ——, the gunmaker in Piccadilly. I'm in his books for £350." He carried his alleged debts as lightly as a flower. He always wanted to introduce us as customers to the people in whose books he was deep. "You can mention my name," he used to say. I am bound to say that when we sent an order they supplied it.

He had two delicious sporting dogs, Dora, a red setter, and Fly, a most charming little spaniel. Fly had all manner of tricks. She used to go through her repertoire to amuse the servants in the kitchen, entirely on her own and without being asked. I have come upon the cook, sitting at the show all alone, and murmuring to herself in ecstasies of delight: "Oh, isn't he a lovely fellow?" quite ignoring Fly's sex.

Fly's master brought in a full bag, day after day—Brookhill was a famous sporting estate—and he took charge of Pamela's horsemanship. He himself rode like a centaur and he was absolutely fearless for his pupil. When Mrs. ——, who looked as though she had been poured into her sporting coat and skirt, so moulded upon her it was, heard of those riding lessons, she remarked

easily: "Damn you, Dick! what did you mean by it? A precious only girl too!"

But Dick's pupil swears by her riding-master.

Brookhill was full of dogs in those days. Not only had we our own three—Finn, the Irish terrier, and the two Poms, Brian and Fritz, but Dora and Fly could not be kept out of the drawing-room, and there was Lossie, a dear little Cairn, belonging to Captain Mulholland. Lossie always made her way to the Brookhill drawing-room, with its roaring fire, no matter how often she was slapped and brought back to her master's quarters. For sheer charm commend me to the female dog, and Lossie was the most insinuating, ingratiating creature alive. She made love to everything, canine and human, that came her way. Then there was Lossie's puppy, a fat black lump whom we called "the Pudden." It was quite uncertain what strain he had in him besides the Cairn, but Captain Mulholland thought he was going to make a ratting terrier. Personally I saw no sign of the terrier.

So "the Pudden," who was indeed a puppy of an indomitable spirit, once he had braced himself to pass a cow on the road without shrieks of terror, was to be "'ardened," according to Moore, Captain Mulholland's groom, who was in private life a Horsham farmer and horse-breeder. The process of "'ardenin'" was to be very stern, and we were bidden, to our grief, hands off "the Pudden," who came no more waddling through the hall and into the drawing-room like an endearing black slug. He was equally grieved, I am sure, at the restriction.

In those latter days the stables at Brookhill, which belonged to the great days when every country house had its huge stable-yard and stables well filled, were occupied by the horses belonging to the General and his Staff. By the way, when the latter fact was imparted to Sheila Gwynn, she said: "Oh, Pam, and *are* the hens laying *lots* of eggs?" a remark the application of which may not be apparent to everyone.

Moore kept the puppy strictly to the stables, while the mysterious process of "'ardenin'" was going on. We were not allowed to see him beyond the heart-breaking paw which used to waggle under the stable-door when he heard a beloved foot go by.

The day came when a rat had been caught in the stable-yard, and Lossie, who had not hitherto been a ratter, was brought out to win her spurs. The infectious enthusiasm of Captain Mulholland haled us all out from the fire to the stable-yard, where the puppy was tearing at the cage containing the rat in a frenzy of eagerness to tackle it. But the puppy was considered to be too young, though everyone agreed with his master that he was a tiger, a perfect tiger. There was a great deal of noise going on when the rat was set free in a loose box. Lossie, being introduced, took it for a new kind of puppy, ran to it and proceeded to mother it. Finn turned tail, bolted from it, and could not be induced to return. The Poms shrieked in unison at the top of their voices, and were pushed away as nuisances by everybody. Only the puppy was game, and the puppy was not allowed at his early age to tackle the rat, lest his nerve should be broken. Captain Mulholland was protesting at the top of his voice that he had never seen such a tiger as the puppy, and that he was going to make a demon ratter.

Suddenly the rat escaped. The dogs fled before it, all except the puppy, who was in frenzies of eagerness to be at it, constrained in Moore's arms. While everyone was making a terrific row, all talking at once at the top of their voices, Dora appeared. We had sworn to the Major that in his absence Dora should not so much as see a rat or a rabbit. She was not to know such creatures existed. Dora was off on the rat's track and killed it in a few seconds, while everyone was imploring everyone else not to let the Major know.

I may as well finish the tale of "the Pudden." At Christmas he was taken up to Ballywalter. Pam had been riding a little mare of the General's, which had

belonged to Percy Wyndham, with Moore in attendance. Moore came back, after a visit to Ballywalter, and when Pam asked after the puppy he behaved as though a death had taken place in his family. He struggled for words and could not speak.

"Is the puppy dead?" Pam got out at last, feeling that she had put her foot in it very badly.

"No, Miss," replied Moore, struggling for composure, "'e's not exactly dead—but, Miss, all my 'ardenin' weren't of no use. 'Er Ladyship's softenin' of 'im. She's softenin' of 'im. 'E ain't any good now—no more'n *your* dorgs!"

We heard afterwards that the puppy's paternity had been traced to the "Capting's" old retriever and a famous sporting dog, so the puppy was being trained as a retriever in the expectation that he would turn out as well as Papa.

CHAPTER III

TALK OF WAR

Now that one is no longer forbidden by the publishers to mention the War, I may tell of Pat's experience, his going over the top, and also some of the things which came out in his talk. He found a circle of interested listeners, not all civilians, in the Brookhill drawing-room during the ten days of his leave. He had savoured life very keenly during those six months in France and he had not had time to be tired. There were a good many tired men at Claremorris, on the six months' home-service which was always being broken up before it was at an end.

A lady whose son had been killed at Ledeghem, where and when Pat went over, wrote to me asking me if I could tell her exactly what had happened that day, or put her into communication with Pat, of whom she had heard as taking part in the same attack.

I gave her Pat's address, sending her at the same time the article in the *Star* dealing with his going over. She wrote to me that the article told her all she wanted to know. So I am justified in repeating it for other people who may want to know.

He had lived for several months in ardent anticipation of "going over the top," being kept so long from his object because "young and efficient officers were required" in another division. Side by side with him was a dandyish young officer, Dicky Wagner, one of his brother-officers, for whom he had a great affection. There was horrible confusion. Dicky Wagner, pulling on

his gloves, with a cigarette between his lips, murmured petulantly: "This is really very annoying." "I'm very sorry," said Pat humbly: "it's my first show." "Oh, I didn't mean you," said Dicky Wagner, "only it is such a horrid muddle." Pat said that the sight of Dicky Wagner, his cigarette and his gloves, cool and petulant, heartened him amazingly.

At last the day and the hour had come, and he was with his battalion of the Dublins, which belongs to the "incomparable" 29th Division—*vide* Sir Ian Hamilton.

The day was in October, the hour 5.35 a.m. when he "went over." They had had a most heartening address from the Brigadier-General.

"I know you are tired men, but I want you to do this and afterwards you will have a rest. You have on your left the ——, on your right the ——. Facing you are the Prussian Guards. I never knew you yet to fail to take an objective. Therefore I am always glad to go over with you."

So they went, and twenty miles of guns broke at once into deafening, blinding, earth-rocking, heaven-shaking noise.

It was a misty morning to start with, and the smoke of the barrage thickened the mist till it was impenetrable. The neophyte found himself under the tottering gable of a house, where, with some others, he sought shelter.

Someone came through the mist. "Get out of this: it is a death-trap."

Forward again he reeled, blinded and smothered and deafened amid the bursting shells. "You learn humility out there," he says, "you are so horribly frightened."

Suddenly through the screaming hell a shell found him. He was blown off his feet into a deep shell-hole and struck full over the femoral artery. He thought vaguely that he was killed; then, slowly recovering from the daze, he put his hand where he had been struck, expecting to find blood. He was absolutely whole and uninjured.

He was up again and out in the mist, calling to something that brushed his elbow, "Who are you?" and receiving no answer. After a while he picked up another straggler, and another. They held together, while the barrage went on overhead, everywhere.

Presently out of the mist, like trees walking, came six gigantic figures. Up went three revolvers and six pairs of hands. "Who are you?" They were six men of the Prussian Guards.

You should see this David to Goliath! He covered his two with a revolver. They stood with hands up, having thrown away all their equipment. One still had a revolver at his belt. He made a dive at it with one hand, holding up the other; finally succeeded in plucking it from the belt and hurling it to a distance, after which the sweat of fear dried on his brow and he beamed propitiation.

"Guerre fini," said one, offering his boots, which were not accepted.

"When will the guerre fini?" Pat asked.

The giant lifted up three fingers: "Guerre fini: three weeks."

The barrage had lifted, and they were in clear air once more. He found his company commander by the roadside reorganising the attack. Opposite to them, from a ridge, a battery of Boche field-guns was firing point-blank.

"We'd better take that ridge," said his company commander.

They rushed the ridge, and in thirteen seconds there were seven casualties. He took his men down the sheltered side of the ridge while his company commander stayed behind to bind up the wounded.

Later, he came upon a friend sitting on one of the silenced guns. "So you are alive," said the friend; "I heard that you were blown to pieces by a shell; that D—— was trying to bind up your wounds when you died on the stretcher." He laughed prodigiously over this

narrative and they shared a whisky flask, much needed, between them.

So they followed the tide of war, part of the Great Day, without knowing that the day was great.

"In the war," he says, "everything drops away from you but Life and Death. It is strange to come back and hear the old talk and the old drawing-room discussions. Out there they only care if a man is brave. So-and-so has won everything through bravery on the field. At home he might not count for very much. Out there he is tremendously popular, because nothing matters but courage."

Late in the evening of the second day he was in reserve, and was told that his leave had come. "When I heard that," he said, "I was more than ever anxious to survive."

I asked Pat later on what an attack was like. He answered: "In the cold zero hour of October 14th, a crowd of men swarmed over the railway line at Ledeghem with fixed bayonets, running through the station and down the village street, all units and regiments being mixed up, while in front a long-drawn, almost uniform roar of successive explosions shook the smoke, which every moment became more impenetrable."

The missile which had struck him was a piece of jagged metal from a German high-explosive shell. He had his compass in his pocket instead of round his neck, and the projectile struck the compass endways, reducing it to a nugget of fused glass and metal. The day he left us, on his way back to France, travelling up to Dublin with Lord Shaftesbury and wearing the trench-coat he had fought in, the side of which had been torn out as well as being burnt extensively by liquid fire, his hand felt a jagged substance in the lining of the coat. On examination it proved to be the piece of metal which had so nearly ended his career, a very formidable missile indeed. The odd thing was that the coat had been mended at

home and the piece of metal—which I now possess—had eluded discovery.

Sir John Ross said to me afterwards: "Mrs. Hinkson, if it had been a crucifix instead of a compass, what a score for your Church!"

"Ah," said I, "God works miracles by compasses as well as by crucifixes."

It was a very happy ten days, with, of course, the cloud of parting that lay upon all meetings in those days. But already there was talk of approaching peace, and we could only hope that Pat would not be again in the line before the peace came. It was hard to believe in its coming, it had been so long delayed.

The day he left—October 29th—I let the others go to see him off. It was the last time his father was to see him.

The young Signals officer, who had an affection for me, came to look for me in my workroom afterwards—the dear beautiful workroom which everyone admired; I shall never have the like again. Not finding me he explored the house for me, and discovered me upstairs washing my handkerchiefs—not that I had sopped them with my tears.

The Prussian Guardsman who had predicted the end of the War in three weeks from the 14th of October was not far out. On Friday the 8th November the General Armistice had been concluded, but there was as yet no official news. By Sunday it was a thing assured. We talked in the drawing-room at Brookhill that afternoon of the Army of Occupation and what it would be like; and none of the soldiers seemed to think it would be an agreeable duty.

The next day as we walked along the country road, there was a sudden shouting from the Camp, and then began the firing of guns. The unbelievable Great Day had come!

We used to wonder how we should take it when it came, that lifting-off of a burden, the cessation of the

killing, the enormous ease and happiness. It had seemed far off as joy too great for any human heart to bear.

Well, perhaps we had borne too much. Perhaps our hearts were numb. Perhaps the night was coming and had sent its shadows before. We walked home soberly. I sat down and did my daily work. In the little diary I keep, which is just a record, in a few lines, of work done, letters received and written, who came and who went, there is not a word of the Armistice. After the record of letters received is written :

" Did some of serial and then the General arrived and no more work."

Not one word of the Great Day ! I remember that I kept saying to myself : " The boys are safe. No one is being killed. Isn't it wonderful ? Wonderful ! " But all the time my heart was numb.

The General dined with us that night and supplied the champagne, with which we drank to the Day and the Memory of the Dead.

I asked Pat afterwards how they received the news. He said :

" Of course we expected something, but we went on preparing for the big attack all the same. Early in the morning of the 11th November an official notice was sent round in the following words :

" ' Cessation of Hostilities

" ' At 11.0.0 hours to-day, 11.11.18, hostilities will cease on all fronts, on land, sea and air. This must be brought to the notice of all concerned.' "

There was a special poignant grief for those who were killed in those last days, and especially in the hours before eleven o'clock on the morning of the Armistice.

A few days later Pat went with the 29th Division as part of the Army of Occupation into the Rhineland. It was a great trek, but he managed somehow to get a

letter written most days and his postcards came in showers. The soldiers are so slow to put their experiences into words that some of his, written in the perfect un-selfconsciousness of a letter to his mother, may be of interest one day.

"We leave here on Monday, 18th November, and march for two days and rest for two; then march for four days and rest for two; then march for six days, fifteen miles per day. We are supposed to be at our final destination on 12th December. The cavalry move one day's march in front of us. On the way we cross the battlefield of Waterloo. What an opportunity! All our prisoners who have been working in Belgium under the Germans were released when the Armistice came and are streaming back in all kinds of old clothes. They say that the Germans during the latter part of their captivity were on the edge of famine.

"I have just got yours of the 26th. You ask me how I feel about the great event. My feelings are mixed. We all know the blessings of Peace as opposed to the horrors of War, but what we do not realise is that the compensating qualities brought about by necessity will die and be buried with the War. When I came to France I discovered an extraordinary comradeship among men, in the face of a common danger, who had otherwise no ideas or interests in common: this increased and decreased according to the danger. The nearer the men got to the front line the more they appreciated each other at the highest value, and there was a kind of unconscious mutual understanding which made men help and rely on one another.

"All this, I think, will be gone, and we shall merely be acquainted with our lives instead of living them.

"The most fascinating thing in this world is danger, and beside it everything else is artificial. War may bring out the animal qualities in men: perhaps those qualities are best.

"As you say, the price of victory is great, although for England, compared with other countries, it has been light. The English civilian population knows some of the effects of war; but only those who have seen the War know what it is. Think of England, and then of the inhabitants of the occupied parts of France and Belgium, where the wives have not seen their husbands nor the children their fathers for four long years: four years in the power of their enemies, not knowing when the tide of War might again sweep back (as in many cases it has done) and drive them out homeless. Nevertheless, though it is hard on the individual, I think suffering is always good for a nation.

. . . . . .

"We are very badly off for everything just now. As we are marching fifteen miles a day, supplies cannot overtake us. To-day we had to go on emergency rations. Just imagine—I slept in a village two kilometres from Waterloo and never saw it, but I am determined to somehow.

. . . . . .

"I wish I had time to write to you every day, but as we are marching now from dawn to dusk, and I then have to fix up billets, etc., there is little time. The people are extraordinarily friendly, considering everything. I arrived in my first billet yesterday, armed with a loaded revolver, and accompanied by an armed orderly, and the first thing my 'Frau' did was to light a fire in my bedroom and bring me coffee. All the demobilised soldiers are back in their homes again. One fellow told me he was last fighting at a place called Courtrai, and when he discovered that we were the people against whom he had been fighting he couldn't do enough for us. Isn't it delightfully amusing?

"The high standard of living here strikes one very much after Belgium. We arrived here ready for any form of unfriendliness, but we are met with hot coffee and cigarettes. Probably things will be different in

the larger towns. I get my coffee in bed in the morning.

. . . . . .

"We arrived to-day on the outskirts of Cologne. . . . The people generally are extraordinarily friendly, and cannot do enough for us; a good deal of it, I think, is policy. I went with another fellow last night to a local cinema. A Boche came in and sat down beside us, and after bidding us good evening insisted on presenting us with cigars. We enter Cologne the day after to-morrow.

. . . . . .

"I am delightfully comfortable now. I had excellent tea in a café here this afternoon, with cakes made of gooseberries, cream and most delicious pastry. There is certainly no food shortage here. After tea I went to a cinema, where the music was extremely good.

. . . . . .

"Germany is extraordinarily interesting. One sees a most military-looking individual in an elaborate uniform, whom one takes to be at least a Field-Marshal. He is a railway porter. The police are still strolling about in their magnificent dark blue uniforms and cloaks, decorated with gold braid, wearing white gloves and armed with swords and revolvers. I suppose they are under the Soldiers' and Workmen's Council now. The demobilised soldiers are still dressed partly in their field-grey service uniforms, with only a civilian cap or coat to show that they are no longer soldiers. It is strange to sit among them in the cinemas and theatres and to think that I was fighting them two months ago. One is almost startled to see our soldiers in the theatres, carrying their rifles; it is so difficult to realise that we are still technically at war with these people.

"We march through Cologne to-morrow and cross the Rhine. You must see the Rhine some day. I fear I shall not see it at its best, as the weather is very wet. The Meuse, which is something like the Rhine in

miniature, I saw on a glorious frosty day, its steep, rugged banks clad in pine forests, with huge rocks jutting out here and there.

. . . . . .

"To-day we marched through Cologne. The rain was pouring down in sheets. We marched by the giant cathedral, with the towers swathed in mist—what a masterpiece of labour!—standing out majestically, and towering high above the city. We marched past the Army Commander (General Plumer). I will tell you all about it when I come. The march into Germany has been a wonderful education to me. I feel so happy at the prospect of seeing you so soon that I don't want to write any more, but to wait and tell you about everything.

. . . . . .

"I send you a box of miscellaneous souvenirs, including the splinter from the German high-explosive shell which so nearly did for me. It recalls a landmark in my life. It brings back, pictured in my mind, the main street of the little Belgian village of Ledeghem on a cold October morning, when the first pale streaks of dawn crept into the sky, and the village, empty and asleep, was awakened suddenly to find itself shattered and tottering beneath tons of high explosives, and the whole drama of War seemed centred and concentrated on it and it alone.

. . . . . .

"It is a great pity that in our march into Germany we missed the towns, but they, in any case, require time and leisure to see them properly. The two places which I am most anxious to see are Waterloo and Ledeghem, and I am determined if possible to see them. Imagine trains again going along the railway line which not long ago was the line of the German counter-barrage. Think of people waiting for trains on that platform where hundreds of men waited in an agony of mind for the barrage to lift! It is almost impossible to conceive.

Similarly, can the names of Paschendaele and Ypres ever lose their sinister and death-like significance? "

We had a great disappointment that Christmas. He was sent home with another officer to bring out the Regimental Colours, which had been left in the keeping of the Mayor and Corporation of Torquay. After all, he was not able to leave Torquay, where he had a wretched Christmas. No one even thought of asking him to dinner on Christmas Day. His senior officer had gone away and he ate his Christmas dinner alone in the hotel. It was late on Christmas Eve when his box of souvenirs and presents came. It had, of course, been held up by the Christmas rush—and for three days we had been sending the car to meet every train.

It was a very lonely Christmas and our last at Claremorris, and together. We had come to the parting of the ways.

CHAPTER IV

MAYO AND RESIDENT MAGISTRATES

I HAVE been told that *The Years of the Shadow* gave an impression, in Mayo at least, that I very much disliked Mayo and presumably its people. I should like to correct that impression. It was quite true that we were the objects of something like a social boycott by the Mayo "quality." My husband's appointment was made by Lord Aberdeen. He was the Home Rule Viceroy, and so not to be forgiven, despite his beautiful qualities of mind and heart. I have always thought of Lord and Lady Aberdeen that they are not of this world, and so this world—as represented by a certain class in Ireland—hateth them.

Another reason for the boycott was that we were supposed to have supplanted Alan Bell, who had been sent up North, and very much objected to leaving Claremorris. There were other reasons, perhaps, but this is too much a personal matter for me to dwell on. Suffice it to say that we had had three very lonely years at Claremorris before the coming of the soldiers in April, 1918.

The Mayo people we hardly knew at all. It is said of the Mayo men, of the Western men generally, that they lock their hearts against all who are not of the West. I have heard the Leinster wives of Western men complain that in a long life together they have never known the hearts of the men they were married to. Perhaps my husband's official position set up something of a barrier between us and the people. I have always been accustomed in Ireland to know everybody and to have long

talks with people as I go the road. I imagine that Mayo is the closest and most secretive of all the western counties to a stranger.

The priests said that the people were not accustomed to be spoken to by their social superiors; and that probably was true. I very soon gave up saying, "That's a nice-looking pig you've got there!" or "Was there a good price going for bullocks to-day?" because the people did not understand it nor seem to expect it. It was woefully unlike what I had foreseen when I went into the West. But we kept the old Ireland in the people about Brookhill and Carradoyne, who had lived under the Lamberts—Peter Walsh, Kate and Jimmy O'Brien, Mrs. Holloran and her husband: they were the Irish I had known and loved. There was also the Lamberts' little old gardener; I've forgotten his name. He used to come and look at the big walled garden of Brookhill, which had superseded the old garden that lay out in the sun and wind, under the drawing-room windows—its paths, and the shapes of its beds, were always coming up in the moss, though it must have been long, long since it was given back to grass. The old fellow would say: "Wisha, wisha! Brookhill garden was always a late and a cold garden. No matter what I did the gardener at Carradoyne always bet me with the early pays and the new potatoes."

So different were the Lamberts' old retainers from the others that one felt that the Lamberts must have stood out among their neighbours on the higher social plane. Certainly it was delightful to be their tenants. They and their agent, Mr. Ruttledge, could not have been kinder. After some months at Brookhill Mr. Ruttledge said to someone, who told it to us, that we were admirable tenants and never asked for anything to be done. While we preened ourselves on this commendation—I believe it was that very night—all the pipes burst and the roof sprang a leak.

I had always known generosity and hospitality to be

of the Irish virtues. We found them in Mayo among the priests and the doctors, my husband's professional brethren, and just a handful of the Anglo-Irish gentry. There was Harry Knox of Creagh, the Ruttledges of Bloomfield, and the Fitzgerald-Kennys of Clogher House: as far away as Sligo the Hasting-Joneses. Once a kind old parson at Louisburgh gave us delightful hospitality; and I saw only too little of Mrs. Hegarty of Clonbur. We visited Lord Killanin at Spiddal and he came to us. That was about all. I think there must have been a ukase which some were not strong enough to brave. Many people came at the close of whom we had seen nothing during the three lonely years. Some people were, I think, influenced by the fact that Lady Elliott, who had been a former tenant of Brookhill, returned for a few days while we were yet at Carradoyne, and told the neighbours that she had heard of us from Lord Grey, whose friendship had been such a happiness during the three lonely years. The most lovable of men had taken a great interest in Pat and Pam. Lady Elliott told how he had knocked at the door of the *United Empire Review* for Pam, aged fifteen; had got a poem of hers accepted there as a delightful surprise for the young lady, only to find that the poem had already gone into the *Queen*.

The unneighbourliness is certainly a chill memory. When our two boys were fighting on different fronts, my husband met, week after week, at his Courts loyal magistrates who never asked if the boys lived or died. He had enormous journeys. Mayo, which is the biggest county in Ireland, had had its staff of four Resident Magistrates reduced by two, early in the War. Dublin Castle had acted with characteristic meanness. Whereas the usage up to then had been that a Resident Magistrate going outside his own district received his expenses, this huge accession of work carried with it no additional expenses and no additional pay.

In a county like Mayo, of great distances, and no hotels

beyond two or three, hospitality was once the necessary rule. Perhaps hospitality had never really inhabited the houses I think of. Perhaps Ireland derived her reputation for hospitality from quite different sources. My husband passed by, week after week of the wild winters, the houses of his brother-magistrates of the Unionist class, without hospitality. The other Resident Magistrates, the ever-hospitable priests, a sprinkling of the "quality," opened their doors to him. For the rest it was a sandwich diet when his way lay only by the inhospitable portals, and, being a delicate man, he often returned with the sandwiches uneaten.

I remember that the Fitzgerald-Kennys, whose hospitality was boundless, who sent us home, after a lavish welcome, laden with all the fruits of their garden, and perhaps a little game thrown in—saying, when we talked of the inhospitality, that they thought Irish hospitality, at least in modern days, was much exaggerated. It could not have been in their case. I am reminded of the sorrowful plaint of a young Irish poet, coming back a year ago from the mountains of Donegal. "When you asked them for water they gave you water." Time was when the stranger would have been given milk, and no payment taken.

This withholding of hospitality could not have been entirely personal, for I remember in our first days in Mayo my husband coming home with a story most disconcerting, almost unbelievable to us, with our traditions of Irish hospitality. He had attended a very distant Court with Alan Bell, Mrs. Bell being of the party. They had called at the house of the local magnate of those parts, who was a friend of the Bells. Luncheon was on the table. The visitors were offered whisky-and-soda, of which the men partook, eating their sandwiches at the same time. They departed as the covered dishes were brought on to the table.

I look back to a period during my nearly nineteen years of residence in England when, revisiting Ireland, some

chance statement of mine revealed the fact that if not invited to a meal you usually left your English friend's house when the meal was imminent. I can smile now at the memory of the shocked faces of my Irish audience as I tried to explain and justify. One lady gasped: "But you would not let any one do that, surely?"

I, being an honest woman, blushed to the roots of my hair while I faltered, "Well—you see—it is the custom."

The audience, being friendly and polite, changed the subject, but I am sure their opinion of me underwent a sad revision. Of course, the Irish menu was always much more elastic. There was always an extra handful in the pot for the man coming over the hill; and if there wasn't itself, the casual visitor shared what there was.

Since the tight times came I have observed in Ireland, and indeed sometimes in England, the utter impossibility, to a class brought up to habits of hospitality, of giving up those habits. The younger generation may not find the self-denying ordinance so bitter.

Let me before I pass away from Mayo name one or two friends besides those I have mentioned. There was the Archbishop of Tuam, at once the wisest and simplest of men. He has the most fascinating admixture of the simple and fatherly priest with the man of affairs, of the world perhaps, so necessary when the world must be fought and won with its own weapons.

His hospitality is a delight to remember. Nothing could be more gracious. The good simple meal was served with delicate refinement not always to be found in the houses of celibates. The dignity of the Archbishop was not forgotten nor insisted upon. It came from the man himself, urbane and charming.

Through those last terrible years in Ireland Dr. Gilmartin has come triumphantly. He has been open to all men; he has been perfectly courageous; in the most difficult circumstances his wise sanity has never failed him; he has guarded his flock, yet he has never yielded

to popular clamour or the fear of losing popular favour. He has condemned wrong wherever and by whomsoever committed. He has remembered always that he is the keeper of the souls of the people.

He was most fatherly to me in my hour of need, and kind to my children, as when he bade Pamela select for herself a gift from him which should please her, so that she carries a dispatch case, the gift of an Archbishop.

Then there was our dear "Parish" Father McHugh, who would never take money from us, so that we wondered how he lived. Once he returned me a cheque which covered a subscription for another purpose as well as his own "dues."

"I'll pay the —— out of what you've given me," he wrote jocularly; but he had returned me all. He would not even let us pay for the turf we bought from him.

When we were going—we were as dear to him as he to us—he gave Pamela a gift which touched us deeply. It was a silver cigarette case which had been presented to him by an English baronet whom he had met on his travels, and it bore an inscription. It was perhaps the only thing he had to give away; and he had been rather proud of its possession.

I know we left a blank in his life, but he tried to comfort us, saying—quite truly—that we had been rather lost in Mayo, where we had found few with our own interests.

Nor can I forget the happy memory of the third Wednesdays spent with Father Healy of Kilmaine, by whose fireside I waited while my husband held his Court, learning more about the people and the country from that wise and observant student than any books could have taught me. The place was full of books, and the big light house of many windows, built from Father Healy's own specifications after Lady Aberdeen's Health Crusade had brought home to him the value of sunlight and air, was full of a spiritual and intellectual brightness, whatever the weather.

I could write an Irish "Abbé Constantin" about some

of those western priests. Let me not forget the Canon, *i. e.* Canon D'Alton of Ballinrobe, with his fine, stately presence, his scholarly mind, his abounding kindness and hospitality; and his nephew, the young D.D. of Rome, who had reconstructed Horatian days in ancient Rome in a volume which had received the plaudits of English classical scholars and critics.

Alas, so deep does the river of the separation in religion flow between people in Ireland that the Mayo Protestant gentry were unaware, socially at least, of the existence of such men.

Also I must name among my friends that fine gentleman, Tom Brett of Claremorris, who rendered me more service in my hour of need than any other man. I have written a poem, "Princes in Ireland," which I have dedicated to Thomas Brett. I was struck by the similarity of thought when Dr. Conor Maguire of Claremorris, also a good friend, said to me one day: "Tom Brett! Oh, but Tom Brett's a prince."

Having found people like those, one remembered that the residue of the Irish gentry—those that remained after the calamitous flying of "The Wild Geese"—had been sent by Cromwell to Hell or Connaught, and had in fact been driven into the bogs and wastes of Connaught while their lands were divided up between the Cromwellian soldiery.

If the natural leaders of the people, the Irish Catholic aristocracy, had not flown, after the Siege of Limerick had destroyed the last hope of the Stuarts in Ireland, how different the history of Ireland might have been!

Let me return to the matter of the Irish Resident Magistrates whose case I know. The cheese-paring policy of the Irish Government has had more to do with political troubles than people outside Ireland are aware of. The Irish Rebellion of 1916 had a good many of the ill-paid Civil servants in its ranks. Disaffection to England has been largely kept alive in Ireland by the ill-paid school teachers. A hungry man is a dangerous

man, as Shakespeare knew. Sir Matthew Nathan's turn of the screw when he came to Ireland with the intention of reducing the Proportionate Grant to be paid under the old Home Rule Act, sent numbers flocking to the Republican flag.

I have never yet heard a group of Irish Government officials talk together without someone saying: "Any man who serves the English Government is a fool for his pains," a sentiment invariably received with gloomy assent. Still the English Government has been served with amazing loyalty—but not by hungry men.

I don't think the Irish Resident Magistrates failed in their service to the Government, though during the years of the War some of them went perilously near to being hungry; and in the Irish War some have laid down their lives.

Theirs was an unfortunate position. The Resident Magistrates had no qualifications and no friends. It was a position much sought after by people who did not know. It carried social importance from the traditions of old days, when it was given to younger sons, or as patronage in one form or another. The Resident Magistrate did not need to possess even legal qualifications. All sorts and conditions of men were qualified as Resident Magistrates. I remember that the qualifications of one R.M., set down in the official Year Book, were "Agricultural Pursuits." It was always easy to replace them if they went. There were seventeen hundred and fifty candidates on the waiting-list.

The Resident Magistracy was, I think, instituted in 1860. The class of younger sons, etc., from which it was drawn usually possessed a small private income. Those were the days when eggs could be bought for sixpence a dozen, and chickens for eightpence; and there was abundance of shooting and fishing, and lavish entertainment. The Resident Magistrate's social position in those early days was not far removed from that of the local magnate.

The tradition persisted, incredibly. The R.M. was supposed to subscribe to every fund. If he went by train he must travel first-class, and in all ways he had to keep up as far as he might the dignity of the position, living in a good house, and making a good appearance generally. A motor was essential for the long distances.

Meanwhile the salary had remained as it was in 1860. The Resident Magistrate's salary began at £425, and in the senior grade rose to £725. Only in Belfast did it become £800, which was the utmost limit. There was an additional hundred "forage money," that is, for the upkeep of a horse and trap. The latter sum, adequate perhaps in 1860, was totally inadequate for the upkeep of a motor in the years of the War.

It was not a living wage, and the Resident Magistrates, unless they had private means, were in sore straits. £427 before the War was now worth less than half that amount. Yet the appeals for subscriptions to all manner of charities and amusements came steadily; and the shopkeepers only stared incredulously when one said that something was too expensive. There was still the tradition of the Resident Magistrate of old, before the patronage was in the hands of a Liberal and Home Rule Government, and its recipients poor men.

They were, at least to each other, men and brothers. There was good comradeship between them, born perhaps of the need of the open door and open heart to each other. Also, being Irishmen, they laughed and jested, despite the carking care in waiting around the corner.

I promised a Resident Magistrate, now dead, to ventilate these matters, and I did my best in that direction while he lived. It was about his case, not our own, that I wrote to Mr. Balfour, and received a characteristically kind letter from him. But he was out of office and nothing could be done. The poor Resident Magistrate I think of was driven to taking in paying guests, and could not afford a meat lunch on his long journeys.

To add to the cares of the Resident Magistrate, if

he should die in harness, there was no pension for his dependents. His own pension, already niggardly, had been the subject of a War economy.

Altogether the lot of an Irish Resident Magistrate, under the Liberal Administration and in the days of the Great War and its backwash, was not exactly a happy one.

CHAPTER V

ON THE WORLD

We left Mayo as we had never thought to leave it, only two now where there had been five, since the boys, forced prematurely into the world by the War, would come no more except as visitors.

When Pamela and I stepped into the world from the warm shelter of Brookhill it was with no anticipation that we were to drift about in hotels and other people's houses for at least three years.

We turned our faces Dublinwards: Dublin had been a friendly and a happy place to us. All our belongings had been stored till, as we fondly hoped, we had found the house we wanted; we thought it was only a question of selection.

A friend had found us a furnished house at beautiful Killiney, while we looked about us. We had not seen the house, but we knew it from repute. It was something of a freak house. It had been planned originally for his "lordly pleasure-house" by a President of the Dublin Stock Exchange, who, after a meteoric career went *—phut!*

It was finely planned, but the calamity had left it in a state of incompletion. Far below in the fields was the castellated gateway which led to an avenue that had begun only to be lost in the fields. I was told that the original intention had been that the carriage, or motor, passing through these gates should release a lever which would switch on electric lights all the way up the avenue.

There was a galleried hall to the house. The staircase, which was to connect the galleries and the hall,

a carved wooden staircase of great beauty, brought from Italy, had been seized by the creditors; therefore there was no connection. The gallery above the hall door was for ever isolate—the dust of years and a few dead leaves drifted in it. The other gallery, leading to the bedrooms, was approached only by a mean kitchen staircase.

There was a noble drawing-room, as big as a hotel lounge. It had a cheap mantelpiece, and the windows had never been properly fitted. Inhabitants of Killiney remembered tennis in that room while it was still unwindowed. They remembered when there were no hall-door steps and the hall-door swung as isolate as the gallery. The house had been finished after a fashion, but not after the financier's dreams.

There was no basement, but there was a ground floor, below the hall door level, containing a billiard-room and four bedrooms, bachelors' quarters, presumably.

Outside, the house was a great gaunt edifice, like an institution. I shall never forget the sensation of terror with which I saw it for the first time, staring up at it from the Winter darkness of nine o'clock on a February night. There was but a solitary gas-jet in the hall, but that lit up many windows, since the hall rose to the roof and was of a baronial width. To either side lay the black glimmering mass of the house. I conjectured miles of corridors and empty rooms. Such a habitation for Pamela and myself and two maids! The house was set high above the other houses on the very crest of the hill, which added to the sense of terror that first night.

Our little party had to divide, since the Dublin and South-Eastern Railway refused to carry our dogs, even in the van, unless we provided them with chains and collars; which was quite an impossibility at that hour of the night.

N.B.—The dogs had come as passengers—first-class—by the Midland, Great Western Railway without any

tickets, and the ticket-collector had fondled their heads. So much depends on the individual official!

So half the little party had had to travel by the more accommodating tram, the conductor of which was contemptuous of the railway company, and very sympathetic with the dogs. "Don't take any notice of that oul' line any more, Miss," he said to Pamela. "*You* travel be us."

At Dalkey there was no vehicle to be had, and they had had to strike out into unknown and unlit country, with the dogs—much heartened, however, by several kind people, who, having assured them they'd never get there, put them a bit on their way.

The relief when they arrived safely was so great that, added to the fatigue of the day, it enabled the weary travellers to sleep soundly.

The next morning our eyes opened on the heavenly view—the Vale of Shauganagh, soft below, with the little river flowing through, beyond it the mountains, range upon range: Bray Head and Wicklow Head and the sea, all lying in the country over which our windows looked.

There was the house to explore. One felt like Bluebeard's Wife, opening door after door of the many rooms.

The drawing-room seemed so vast that at first we chose the smaller drawing-room, opening off it, which was quite a respectable size, for our living-room; but very soon we moved to the big drawing-room, where the grand piano in the middle of the floor made the smallest islet.

By daylight the house was the least eerie place imaginable. It was flooded with light; it looked over incomparable beauty: there was no dark place in it. You went from room to room and every window seemed to have a more beautiful aspect than the last. The least beautiful aspect was Killiney Hill, and that, stained to all the purples and ambers and bronzes and every shade of the rose and scarlet, would have made the beauty of a

less fortunate spot. We had there all the procession of dawns and sunsets and the night with its stars. The clustering roof-tops in their gardens lay at our feet. Behind the house stretched the golf links, one of the prettiest links in the world. Above it, among the rocks and heather, you could picnic as though you were a hundred miles from town.

Kenah Hill proved after all a very kindly house. Our landlady had the invaluable quality in a landlady that she never bothered. The house was absolutely your own while you were in it. I had been deceitful about the three dogs; and I lived in terror of her first visit. I had wanted to have it out with the Dublin and South-Eastern Railway in the public press, but had not dared because of giving away the presence of the dogs to the landlady. Lo and behold, when she came I found she didn't mind how many dogs we had; and she had good carpets too!

In the high, windy, sunny house, as the days turned round to Spring, one found health and healing. It had been indeed a black Winter for many, although the War was over. The terrible influenza of that year was raging, and none knew who would be the next victim, and the plague, following the War, like the War, took the young and the joyous.

The boys came home—Toby, whom we had not seen from September 1916, came from Palestine. Pat was with us on embarkation leave: his battalion was under orders for India. The influenza passed and was forgotten, and one began to lift up one's heart.

One day I had an absurd adventure. Emerging from the lane which ran from Kenah Hill, between the gardens, into the road, we heard an angry shouting. Then we beheld Finn, the Irish terrier, investigating with interest a tiny old Yorkshire, which was just being picked up by an irascible-looking elderly gentleman, armed with a stout cudgel. An elderly lady was whimpering in his shadow. Just as we arrived upon the

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A little later on I met an old acquaintance.

"By the way," he said, "you are writing a book about the Rebellion, are you not? You should get at Captain P. He knows what happened in the streets of Dublin as well as any man. Get him to tell you. You know

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And he did most generously, though he did not much like talking about it. The conversation had its pitfalls. Once I blundered into saying something about cruelty to animals and was recalled sharply to a sense of my error by the deepening colour on the face of my new friend. I am sure I turned pale. Anyhow I hastily switched away from the subject. Except for that little *contretemps* the afternoon was an unqualified success.

The boys were great company for us when it was much needed. Toby had but three weeks' leave, and went back to Palestine. If he figures less in this narrative than Pat it is because of his long absence and the fact that he was not much of a correspondent.

Pat had an amusing adventure on his way home from the Rhineland, when he travelled a portion of the way in a train which had neither doors nor windows. It was

scene the elderly gentleman struck Finn a resounding whack with his cudgel.

Well, then, as they say in Ireland, the row riz. There was not much I did not say. I know I called the elderly gentleman a coward, among other things. He was quite as enraged as I was, but, suddenly, his jaw dropped. There was another Irish terrier, who had come on the scene and was surveying it with interest from the steps of a lodge. The elderly gentleman stared with a horrified stare; then, still clutching his little dog, and with his head down, he scurried away, followed by the lady, we hurtling epithets after him as he fled.

It was some time before the explanation dawned on us. Our harmless Finn had been mistaken for Captain Cullen, the terror of the dog-owners of Killiney. One little friend of ours could hardly be persuaded to leave her house, or allow her Tubby to leave it, because of Captain Cullen. Even after Captain Cullen had challenged Bully Green, a bulldog, to mortal combat, and had fallen back on his own lines " dripping blood," as a lively young lady put it, there was still Bully Green.

We had discovered the identity of the truculent elderly gentleman from Captain Cullen's owner, who was naturally in agreement with us, and I had my misgivings when I learnt that he was a former Captain of the Fire Brigade. I had called him a coward! Presumably one might as well call the holder of a V.C. a coward as a Captain of the Fire Brigade. I was very uneasy about it, even though I stuck to it that he deserved the title. And then the case was much less black than we had supposed—I had got at the mistake about Captain Cullen, who was accused of innumerable crimes against harmless dogs.

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Pierce, his son, don't you? The best of good fellows, Pierce."

"I know Mrs. Pierce," I said, "but I'm afraid it's no good about Captain P.:" and I told the story.

"Oh," said he, "he won't mind that. It's as good as an introduction. You write and tell him that you want to know all he can give you about the Rebellion and ask him to come and see you."

I wasn't equal to that shamelessness, but a few days later Mrs. Pierce left a card in my absence asking me to come to tea. I wrote back and explained that after my *fracas*, as the Dublin newspapers would call it, with her papa-in-law I really daren't come. She replied that she wasn't her father-in-law and would I come and play bridge on Saturday and stay for the evening meal?

Well, of course, the papa-in-law lived at some distance and I took it for granted that she would take care we did not meet, but, arriving on the Saturday, I found myself put down *tête-à-tête* with my adversary of a week earlier, his daughter-in-law remarking, "You are to tell Mrs. Hinkson everything you know about the Rebellion, Papa."

And he did most generously, though he did not much like talking about it. The conversation had its pitfalls. Once I blundered into saying something about cruelty to animals and was recalled sharply to a sense of my error by the deepening colour on the face of my new friend. I am sure I turned pale. Anyhow I hastily switched away from the subject. Except for that little *contretemps* the afternoon was an unqualified success.

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Pat had an amusing adventure on his way home from the Rhineland, when he travelled a portion of the way in a train which had neither doors nor windows. It was

bitterly cold weather. One such train-load had perished from the cold. In Pat's carriage they lit a kind of flare in an old petrol can, which somewhat raised the temperature, though it was a risky thing to do.

At Namur there was a stop long enough to warrant his getting out and breakfasting at a hotel, where the simple meal cost him a pound sterling. He got back to the station to find the train gone. After some consideration he decided that if he could get across country to Charleroi, with any kind of speed, he could join the train there.

He set out as cheerfully as he could. It was bitterly cold—several degrees below zero. He had proceeded some distance when he heard a great clattering and horn-blowing behind him, which came from a little red motor-car in which sat two small Belgian men, one driving furiously, the other sounding the horn as furiously. They had their peaked caps on back to front, the better to withstand the velocity of the wind.

He signalled to them, and they stopped as soon as they could, and asked what he wanted. He explained. Yes—they would take him as far as they were going on the road to Charleroi. He hopped in, and they were off again at the same Flying Dutchman speed. Everything passed them at such a rate that houses, trees, fields, woods were all mixed up and indistinguishable. Pat was icy cold within his greatcoat and the snow had begun to fall. Any conversation was impossible for the speed: so Pat sat tight and waited for what might happen.

They had been at it some time when, suddenly, the car turned and plunged for open country. It tore along what we in Ireland call a boreen, through the midst of ploughed fields, till, looking ahead nervously, Pat saw a village, full in their track. He was hardly aware of it before the car crashed in through somebody's hall door and stuck there.

Then began the hullabaloo. The whole village was out, all talking and screaming together. The owner of the house was demanding vociferously who was going to

pay him for his door. The two motorists were blaming each other, shrieking into each other's faces like nothing so much as two small game-cocks. The *gendarmerie* had arrived. Pat was asking himself miserably how far he was going to be implicated in this forcible entry of an allied house.

Suddenly, the Belgian who had driven sprang to his seat, and took the wheel. He extricated the car, backing it into the crowd, which scattered in all directions. The horn-blower was in with equal speed and they signalled to Pat, who jumped up behind, and off they were at the same mad pace, leaving the justly outraged village screaming behind them.

They put Pat down twenty miles from Charleroi, and disappeared over the edge of the earth. He was all but frozen : and the snow was falling thickly. Suddenly, looking behind him, he became aware of a rosy blur through the snow. It was the window of a cabaret and there was a roaring fire of wood on the hearth. It was heaven.

He was fed and warmed before an army lorry came by and pulled up in answer to his call. He got in. The lorry was crowded to the utmost extent with men, women and children, who were speaking a babel of tongues. Refugees. The driver confided to Pat that "he had such a feelin' 'art he could refuse no one." But he had never before driven in snow, and he had no chains on his wheels, so that the front wheels were going at four miles an hour and the back wheels at forty. This produced a waltzing movement which carried them round and round the road, now and again plunging them in a ditch, when all the refugees had to get out while the lorry was extricated.

However, Pat had the good fortune to arrive at Charleroi to find "the Cologne Express," the old hospital-train, which was exquisite luxury as compared with the ordinary transport. By special favour he was allowed to board it, and so got home all right.

He told us that when the 29th Division entered Cologne the German children, fat and rosy, trooped out of the communal houses, into which they had been gathered so that they should not suffer the privations of their own homes, and swung from the soldiers' tunics, full of life and gaiety. As soon as the organisation had broken down it was not so well with the children; but, he said, the amiability of the soldiers prevented much suffering. They were always ready to share their rations with anyone who needed food.

One Irish officer remonstrated with Pat because he accepted coffee in the mornings from his "Frau," lest she should go without herself. This Irish officer, going on leave, brought back to his "Frau" an abundance of small things—soap, darning-wool and such-like, which were not then procurable in Germany.

I think the Army found the Rhinelanders very agreeable. Pat used to crackle with laughter over the story of a Colonel who, before the frontier was reached, issued the most drastic order against fraternising, and expressed the most bloodthirsty intentions in case of any infringement of the Armistice by the late enemy.

The battalion commanded by this Colonel arrived very late at night in a strange German town, with everyone asleep, and none to guide them to possible billets. At the moment of greatest need there turned up a German who had spent several years in London. He made everything smooth for them, and, as a result, the Colonel invited him to dinner at the Mess. "What else could I do to show him our gratitude?" he asked his amused officers.

There was a good deal of fraternisation with the fair sex. One young gentleman was equally in love with two little Fräuleins. He had even the privilege of plaiting their hair before they retired for the night. His Colonel, coming in one day to find him at the piano, hanging over the two little girls, said: "Hello, youngster, have you

enough of the language to make love in?" "We don't need it, sir," said the young gentleman.

Pat used to tell me that a brother of a very famous V.C. consulted him as to whether he could not accompany his Fräuleins to Mass on Sundays. Pat advised against it; but it was a grievous matter to many of the Army of Occupation when the Fräuleins curtseyed to them in the street that they could not respond.

These stories of Pat's very much exasperated a certain lady at Claremorris who had suffered no loss nor fear in the War. It was always the untouched who were bitter. The General, on the other hand, was hugely amused. He said: "Well, of course, in the matter of the fair sex, much latitude must be allowed." He wrote a letter to Pat suggesting the various ways in which the two very young ladies might be informed of the non-return of their swain. On the whole the General plumped for giving the sad news by a letter dropped from an aeroplane. He thought it might save embarrassment.

I believe the Army of Occupation generally learned two German phrases on the Rhine. They were "I love you!" and "Give me a kiss!" Still there was one staunch hater who used to shake his fist at the astonished small children, saying in pidgin English: "You . . . Germans . . . use poi . . . son gas."

I never found that soldiers had any use for hatred. It was a civilian attribute and it was usually absent in the bereaved.

Before we left Claremorris Pat had a birthday, and we gave him a small family festa, decorating the table with crackers left over from Christmas. There came in unexpectedly our new curate, a boy barely older than Pat himself—or he did not look it—and on his first cure of souls. The little festa had to be explained to him, and we left him with Pat after dinner to hear all about the Occupation. He was the humblest and shyest of boys.

When he went away Pat escorted him to the hall-door steps, where they stood a while talking. As they said

good-bye he left something in Pat's hand—a little birthday present, he whispered.

When Pat brought it to the light it revealed itself as a five-pound note. The little curate had mentioned casually that he had no table and ate his meals from a tray on a chair.

"There are Princes in Ireland!"

CHAPTER VI

MEMORIES

DEATH was very busy that Winter and Spring. I had written the obituary of Mrs. Rowan Hamilton for the *Times* in December when she was comatose and her death expected momentarily. She lived till February, I think, when so many of the young and those in their prime had fallen in the intervening weeks.

She would have been a hundred years of age if she had lived till the following June; and she had wished to be a hundred. Some time in the Summer of 1918 she had corrected the proofs of the chapter dealing with herself in my *Years of the Shadow*, and had been greatly pleased with what I had written about her. I had a feeling that she must have been pleased with the *Times* obituary, if but she could have read it.

I had seen her last in the Spring of 1918, when she was still able to sit in her chair in the drawing-room at Shauganagh Castle and receive visitors.

"I feel very dusty and dingy," she said, "now that the Spring has come; but I am only waiting for my daughter, Lady Dufferin, to come to take me to Dublin for new clothes."

I don't think she ever did go to Dublin after that. The last occasion on which she went it was in the motor-car of her neighbour, Sir Stanley Cochrane. I forget if it was her first experience of a car—probably not; but I know she was vastly pleased with the kindness which offered the car.

On that last visit she called Pamela to her and handled her hair, letting it drop through her fingers.

"My dear," she said, "you must take good care of your hair. I remember a wicked hairdresser in Bath, when I was a little girl, about 1830, who actually cut off a beautiful plait like this, so you must be very careful indeed. There are such dreadful people in the world."

She was still able to read then, and reading was her great solace. She had a library subscription and she read all the notable books, as became the mother of two Ambassadresses. But the library subscription did not keep her going and I used to supplement the books with fiction. One book she did not greatly approve; it was Mrs. Belloc Lowndes's *Studies in Wives*. I thought it might have been too modern for her, but her granddaughter, Ethelwynne, said: "Oh no; you see, Granny likes her books either quite proper or really improper."

She remembered in that last illness to express a wish that I should have a miniature of Benjamin Franklin, which had always hung near her chair, where she sat by a wall-space covered with miniatures. She had already given me on one of my later visits a couple of Sèvres cups and saucers, the last of a set bought by her mother, Lady Abdy, in Paris towards the close of the eighteenth century.

With her going there passed a great old figure from Ireland and one of its dignities from Shankill, which is still the most dignified place I know in Ireland, none of the crudities and uglinesses of the new days having reached it.

At the end of March 1919—a great shock to us—came the violent death of poor Jack Milling, who had been my husband's next-door neighbour in the Resident Magistracy. His death remains a mystery to this day. Over and over again Sinn Feiners have denied emphatically that his death was political. The manner of it was curiously dramatic. He had gone into the dining-room of his house at Westport at twelve midnight on the 29th of March to alter the clock to Summer

Time. The window was unblinded, and he was revealed to the man who lay in wait for him by the light he carried. We could not have imagined that anyone would have wanted to kill Jack Milling, who was the kindest and simplest of big boys; but he had had some local trouble and his motor-boat had been burnt. He was quite capable of saying or doing foolish things; and a little while earlier he had suggested my husband's exchanging with him, saying: "You are popular with them. You are on their side." My husband had often scolded him for the careless and imprudent things he was in the habit of saying publicly.

He ought to have been popular, not only because of his personality, but because his also was a popular appointment, conferred by the Liberal Government because he gave straight evidence at an inquiry into some Belfast rioting.

He was irresistible to tease. A trick which never failed with him was to profess disloyal sentiments. I remember that once it took the form of singing a Jacobite song. To pretend to drink to the King over the Water was quite enough to set him off. When he had worked himself up to a fine rage with us and our rebelly opinions we would suddenly give in handsomely, remarking that the English were the superior race and rightly the dominant one, confessing our own inferiority mournfully and shaking our heads over our own country. He always rose. He would roar like a bull at us for degenerate Irish, saying that an Irishman was the equal or the superior of any man in the world, and that, for his part, he had never seen an Englishman he would compare to a good Irishman. He never discovered that we were out to tease him.

When he came into Brookhill, the door of which stood open all day and as long as anyone was out of bed, if he found no one in the drawing-room he would go through the house, "bawling" for his friends until he found them.

Most unexpectedly he was a Plymouth Brother. We roared with laughter the day he said solemnly that he lived by the Bible; the excellent sentiment seemed so strange in his mouth.

He loved to tell of the rows in Belfast where he had been a D.I. There was one glorious tale at which his eyes lit up and he became impassioned with dramatic fire, of a chase over roof-tops, through crumbling tenements and over the walls of backyards, of a formidable specimen of the most riotous town in the world. He "got" him at last with a big water-jug which he had picked up in the chase, just smashing it on the rioter's head as he climbed over the last ditch in the obstacle race. "You should have heard the crash!" he used to say, with satisfaction; but his man got off after all. They have hard skulls in Belfast.

His hospitality was unbounded. On the meagre salary of a Resident Magistrate in the third class, he was always willing and eager to entertain his friends. He might go without himself, but there must be "lashin's and to spare" for his friends. He was an eminently sociable soul. Every time we met him at a Petty Sessions Court he had a car-load of people out for a drive.

His father had been D.I. at Westport, and he had been born and brought up there, where the old people still remembered him as "Master Jack." I can remember the day in 1916 when he came in and told us that he had paid a visit of sympathy to Mrs. MacBride, whose son had been shot in Dublin for his share in the Rebellion.

"That was a brave and a kind thing," one of us said.

"Brave?" he repeated. "What was brave about it? Didn't I know her since I was *that* high? and wouldn't anyone be sorry for the poor woman?"

There is a letter of his lying under my hand. I had wished to give him my husband's motor-coat, which he had worn but once.

"I feel so lonely," he wrote, "and I cannot bear this country now. He was so kind and hospitable to me and

always so glad to see me: I know none of my *confrères* in the way I knew him and I really sadly miss him. You know I shall love to have the coat, more because it was his than because of the comfort it will be to me."

He had asked for a transfer and been refused. He complained: "They are working me like a galley slave. I have the Belmullet and Ballina districts and am always on the road. Ye Gods, who would be an R.M.?"

The letter concludes with: "Do you know anyone in Dublin who could supply me with bees?"

It makes me smile even now. He was a grown-up boy and was always full of a boy's pursuits. Tragedy seemed so alien to him.

He was to have come at Easter to fetch away the coat, but he was dead before then. Poor Jack Milling, the kindest of the kind!

I have quoted what he wrote about my husband. As I shall not touch on this subject again, let me quote a sentence or two from the letters of others qualified to speak.

"He was so just and always so merciful," wrote his brother magistrate, Jasper White, R.M.

"He had a very remarkable mind and a wonderful sense of justice," wrote the Lord Chancellor, Sir John Ross.

I quote these two testimonies from many because they corroborate the opinion of the people. I like to know that the people among whom he worked, and with whom he was occasionally rigid, recognised his strict sense of justice and that it was tempered with mercy. I think they knew when he put up the fines for drunkenness that it was because he cared for them and their good repute and dignity.

He had a great belief in and admiration for the people's sense of justice. He said they never resented strictness as long as there was justice; and I can remember a Court day, after he had inflicted some fines which were heavy by the old easy-going ones, that Puck, his Shetland

pony, made a demonstration somewhat wilder than usual before getting off. The very men he had just fined rushed to hold Puck down while my husband climbed into the pony-cart and they sent him off with kindly calls of "Safe home, sir! Safe home, your honour!" as the pony rushed on his wild way.

He used to say that in four years he had had but one crime to deal with, and that a crime of cruelty to an animal, inflicted by a mentally deficient person.

He liked the Western people and they liked him, and he was very happy among them. The Irish Law Society had objected to his appointment because he was not a member of the Irish Bar. *Apropos* of this the *Mayo News*, the Sinn Fein paper, wrote him an Open Letter.

"To Mr. Hinkson, R.M.

"There was a bit of a kick-up about your appointment as an R.M., but you have well justified the opinion of those who put you here. You are a gentleman every inch, and your decisions are always of such a nature as to give satisfaction. You are incapable of even a scintilla of prejudice, and you have no political humours. Your estimable lady has made her name in the world of letters; you have established yours here as a high-minded and impartial magistrate."

I remember dear Milling coming in "bawling": "How did you get round the *Mayo News*, Hinkson, and what did you give them for *that?*"

We never knew the writer, to whom I am very grateful now.

There are many things in Irish life which would be incredible and inexplicable to an Englishman. I remember three prisoners being brought to Brookhill one Winter night to have an information sworn against them. I think it was on a political charge—or perhaps it was agrarian. The D.I. from Ballinrobe drove the three in

his motor-car across miles of lonesome bog, where they might easily have overpowered him and escaped. A day or two later the R.M. had the cases before him at Ballinrobe. He had asked the D.I. where he could procure some brown flour. "I don't know," said the D.I., "but we'll ask the prisoners." The prisoners were very willing to help, and one of them was able to supply the flour, so we got what we wanted.

I remember a time when a Sinn Fein prisoner and his Sinn Fein counsel shared a motor to the Petty Sessions Court with the R.M. and the D.I.; and I have known a lonely R.M., stranded in the wretched inn of a country town, cross over in the evening to the house of the Sinn Fein doctor for a game of bridge and some kindly human intercourse with him and his Sinn Fein sons. Neither party surrendered anything politically for that friendliness.

When the soldiers were at Claremorris in 1918, the great friend of some of the officers was a neighbouring vet., of Sinn Fein opinions. When he drove all over the country to see his patients he had invariably a couple of officers in the car showing them the country. He used to dine with them in the Mess in company with a young Sinn Fein solicitor who has spent a good deal of time these last few years on the run or in jail. They used to argue the Irish case over the dinner-table under the nose of the Colonel. I'm sure neither side was any the worse, but both something the better for these interchanges.

A year after we left Claremorris the situation had become much more difficult. I met the Sinn Fein solicitor in a Dublin street. I had just received the letter to which I have referred earlier from Eric Broadway, the young officer of the K.O.S.B. whom we had nursed through influenza that last Summer in Claremorris.

We talked about the letter to the young solicitor, saying: "Alas, he would not find Claremorris so happy a place now!"

"Oh, I don't know about that. We've some awfully decent fellows there—Highlanders. The other day someone fired a shot from a lorry and hit a poor man's cow. The Colonel went to the village where this had happened and addressed the crowd. He began "Fellow-Celts," and went on to say how sorry he was for the accident and that full compensation would be paid for the cow. Finally he said: "I see a number of young men here, and I see a number of people who are probably their parents, and I should like to say to these young men and those who can influence them, that the soldier's task is a difficult and often a very disagreeable one. If you will all remember that and pass by the soldiers civilly, the soldiers will be civil in their turn." My Sinn Fein friend added: "They paid £47 for the cow, and they've got her in the barracks mending her up ever since."

He was arrested a week later for presiding at a Sinn Fein Court and thrown into jail, where he has been on and off since, with intervals of being on the run. His beloved younger brother was killed at Guillemont in September 1916. The boy's photographs in khaki must have met the eyes of the military when they raided the house. The Colonel of the Highland Regiment was right when he said that the soldiers' task was often very disagreeable.

The raiding for arms had started while we were still at Claremorris. When we were only lonely women at Brookhill the D.I., a simple, good-natured man, came and locked up the guns and cartridges, and gave the key of the room to Pamela, bidding her take great care of it, even to sleeping with it under her pillow. She straightway forgot it on the hall table. A day or two later we asked the General, who was dining with us, to take the cartridges off our hands. The wild duck-shooting had begun just before Christmas, and there were about eleven hundred cartridges in the house.

The General agreed, and said he would send for the cartridges, whereupon we, to have them in readiness

for his messenger, put them on a chair in the hall. They were there three days before the messenger came and, as I have mentioned, the hall-door stood open all day and far into the night.

When we told the D.I. what we had done, the sweat ran down his forehead like rain, although it was Winter weather.

Ellen, the parlourmaid, said that "they" had too much respect for us to raid us, but the D.I. did not take that view.

On the journey up from Claremorris the guns went astray with various other things. They were wandering about for a week, and were finally restored to us by Tram Parcels Delivery. Raids for arms were by this time becoming fairly common, so one day after we had arrived at Killiney, finding myself in the vicinity of the local Constabulary Barracks, I had what I felt to be the ridiculous idea of handing over the guns or getting a permit to keep them.

I interviewed a red-haired young constable, who was very distant, not to say suspicious, in his manner till I mentioned the guns. Then he stepped a bit nearer, glanced fearfully over his shoulder in the direction of the fireplace, looked in each corner of the room, and, advancing his mouth almost to my ear, said hoarsely: "Is it guns ye have? Wait a tick till I call the sergeant."

The sergeant came stealthily on enormous feet which shook the edifice and peered at me round the door. Then he came in.

"Ye've two guns?" he said.

"Yes, I've two guns."

"How did ye come to be in possession of them two guns?"

I reassured him on that point, and added as an afterthought that I had also some revolvers.

"Revolvers!" he repeated with a very husky voice, low down in his throat. "How many?"

"Three—or four." They were only curios, but I did not insist upon that, only making haste to mention that the revolvers were stored.

"Where?"

I mentioned the name of the repository.

"Under lock and kay?"

"I don't think so. They are in an open drawer."

The sergeant lifted his eyes to heaven. The constable had tip-toed out of the room discreetly, perhaps to make sure that there were no eavesdroppers.

"It's lookin' for trouble," he said, broken-heartedly.

To console him we suggested that he might take charge of the guns.

"It might be the best coorse to purshue," he said. "They'd be safer with me thin with you. We'll come for them in the dark o' the night whin there's no wan about. It's lucky there's no moon." He suddenly became brisk and business-like. "Say nothin' about them guns to annybody," he said, "an' expect us in the dark of the evenin'."

About seven o'clock Ellen reported that she had seen a couple of tall figures "birds'-nestin' along the hedges." There was a knock at the door and the sergeant and a constable stepped into the hall and closed the door behind them as though they were hotly pursued.

"Ye have two guns, I am told, madam?" said the sergeant, as though he saw me for the first time. "Where do you keep them weapons?"

We indicated an open door. He went a few steps and peered at the guns where they stood upright in their cases against the wall.

"Is anywan aware of the presence of them guns in your house?" he asked.

"The servants."

"Male or female?"

"Female."

"Are they to be trusted?"

"Perfectly."

I added : " Of course the gardener knows and the boy who brought them from the tram."

" Ye might as well have sent out the bellman whin ye were about it," he said. " I'll send the min in the darkness o' the night to take away them guns. I'd advise you, if ye'd listen to me, to lock that door, if there's a kay to it, and keep that kay under direct observation and personal supervision, admittin' no individual to the house, till them guns is off the primises."

The guns were removed that night with a dreadful secrecy.

" Sure," said the parlourmaid, when the nocturnal visit was over, " the world knew about them guns the same as Claremorris people about the cartridges, only they had too much kindness for ye to be givin' ye any trouble."

" They are immortal," said a neighbour of mine the other night, the tears streaming down his face after a rapturous recital of two somewhat similar experiences with the police. " It was a shame ever to shoot them."

CHAPTER VII

RICHARD FRANCIS TOBIN

MANY friends came to see us at Kenah Hill—A. E., the Yeatses, Susan Mitchell, Sir John and Lady Ross, and others. Among them came one to whose memory I would like to pay a loving tribute. He was one of the friends whom one took to one's heart with a strong grip in the sorrowful days of the War. Like others of these friends, I had known him for years in a superficial way: through the War and its sufferings I came to know him for the Great-Heart he was. This was Surgeon Tobin—Dick Tobin, as his friends loved to call him; he has been mentioned before in *The Years of the Shadow*.

A sad thing about the post-war years is that we have gone back in many instances to acquaintanceship with those who once revealed their suffering hearts to our loving and pitying eyes. Perhaps that revelation in retrospect makes for shyness. It is strange and sad to meet almost as strangers men with whom one was once in such close touch. In the same way we forget the losses that once were so sanctifying. Who remembers now when a man or a woman comes into the room that he or she lost one, or two, sons in the War? There was a time when no harsh judgment was possible on those so sanctified by loss. Now once again people are vulgar or silly or negligible in one way or another, their crowns off or dimmed, the softening light that rested upon them gone out, leaving their foibles to the cold light of day.

"Now everyone is sorry for us," said a quite ordinary girl during the War. "It will be harder when the people forget and we have only the empty place."

The halo will never die off Dick Tobin. That suffering, that beautifying, that revealing light which bathed so many people in those sorrowful days was perhaps the true light. The cold and hard light may belong to the finite vision. Just for a moment we saw the heights and the tenderness of the human soul; and then the veil was down, the curtains drawn; the passion of sympathy and pity was quiet: once more those who had come closer than lovers walked separate and apart. Well, it had to be so! The great experiences, the great exaltations, are not for common, work-a-day life. Suffice it that they were once.

Perhaps, with Dick Tobin, if he had lived, the light would not have died away. His only son had been killed at Suvla. Let me repeat for those who may not have read *The Years of the Shadow* his great saying: "When my boy sits down in Paradise I pray that the Turk who killed him may sit down beside him."

His boy's death had taken everything from him except his high heart. When the deaths of the War are counted, the deaths which were the direct consequences of the War are not thought of; yet I would venture to say that every death in the War might be said to have caused another death—that is to say, taking the averages. Captain Patrick Tobin's death at twenty-two had, as its direct result, the deaths of his father and mother and his aunt, who was devoted to him. None of them were young, but apart from the catastrophe of the War they would probably have had many happy years of life.

Mrs. Tobin died after a couple of years of helpless invalidism, towards the end of which she had quite slipped away from those who loved her. Her husband had just touch with her when he pushed her bath-chair about Greystones, the seaside village where they and their friends had all been so happy before the War. He was piteously cheerful about it, with a light like Winter sunshine on his dear old face.

" Fanny is well off," he said, " she has found Paddy."

Soon after Mrs. Tobin's death her sister went, and he was alone except for his loving daughter, who had married in the last year of her mother's life. When he came to see me—for the last time as it proved—about Easter 1919, he had had the real happiness of looking upon his little grandson, and he was very blithe over it. But always on his face was the strange wintry cheerfulness of the man who has been stripped of the joy of life and has accepted all his griefs with a gay and a sad courage.

I can see his face now as we walked up the back avenue of Kenah Hill to the golf-links.

" You and I know," he said, " that death is nothing to grieve about at all. Why, it is safety, it is security. I know now that nothing sad or bad can ever happen to Paddy. If he had lived he might have married someone I didn't like. One never knows. My dear friend "—he turned and took my hands in his—" death is a good thing, a happy thing. You and I know that."

He had written to me once, after the boy's death, that being a Celt he loved love and praise.

" After getting such a letter as yours I walk along the streets with the greatest uplift of the heart, and the people passing by turn round to look at me and say, " What is that fellow so pleased about ? "

He was a loyal man to the British connection, having served for a great part of his life as an Army surgeon, before setting up in private practice in Dublin; but he was also a leal Irishman, and his sympathy with his countrymen, even when he did not see eye to eye with them, was strong and warm.

He saw a good deal of the Dublin Rebellion of 1916 from the windows of his house at the corner of St. Stephen's Green; and he had even crossed the Green when it was in the hands of the insurgents and fighting was in full swing, on his way to see his patients in the Dublin Castle Hospital. Everyone said it was a mad thing to do,

but he never thought of taking any but the shortest way to his patients.

Perhaps his deafness, which never shut him out from love and sympathy with his fellow-creatures, made him less aware of the danger. He used to tell humorously afterwards how he was nearly potted in the Castle Yard, where he had stooped to pick up some cartridges which he thought would exactly fit his revolver.

After the Rebellion was over and done, while it was still the talk of the town, as it was to be for many months, a British officer of high rank described at a dinner-table, where Dick Tobin was also a guest, how a rebel had absolutely stood with the greatest coolness right under the windows of Dublin Castle, from which the troops were firing, while he reloaded his revolver. "We gave him a volley," he said, "but the fellow walked off, evidently quite unhurt."

"Did he shake his fist at you all up in the windows?" asked Dick Tobin.

"Upon my word I believe he did. But how did you know?"

"Had he anything in his hand?"

"He had a revolver."

"He had no revolver; his revolver was safe at home. He had an ear-trumpet in the hand he shook at you, and here it is; that daring rebel was your humble servant."

Among his patients in the Dublin Castle Hospital was James Connolly. "Tone was a most extraordinary man," wrote the Duke of Argyll of another famous Irish rebel. I have remembered that brief phrase when I have heard Connolly discussed. He was certainly a most extraordinary man. I am quite sure that Labour, when James Connolly was shot, lost its greatest leader. There are not many geniuses nowadays. Connolly was a genius. He was a man of commanding intellect. There was nothing of the demagogue about him, as there is about that other leader, Larkin. A. E. I think found his intellect cold and Larkin the more lovable man. The

warmly imaginative nature of Richard Tobin capitulated to his remarkable patient.

Connolly had been shot through the ankle before his surrender at the Post Office, and had remained for some hours directing the operations of his men, though the suffering must have been agonising, for the bone was completely shattered.

That Easter Monday three years after the Rebellion we sat in the big drawing-room at Kenah Hill and discussed Seamus Connolly, of whom Dick Tobin was always willing to speak.

When he was called to attend Connolly after he had been brought into hospital the conversation began in this way.

"Can I do anything for you, Connolly?"

"I want nothing but Liberty."

"You must go to the Shan Van Vocht for that." The Shan Van Vocht, *i. e.* the Little Old Woman, is one of the legendary names for Ireland, as those may know who do not know Ireland but have seen W. B. Yeats's play, *Kathleen-ni-Houlihan*, which, by the way, is another legendary name. "Can I do anything to make you easier?"

"What do you think will happen to me?" asked Connolly.

"You'll be shot."

"Oh, you think that?"

"I am sure of it."

"Why?"

"They can't do anything else. Can they buy you?"

"No."

"Can they frighten you?"

"No."

"Will you promise if they let you off with your life to go away and be a good boy for the future?"

"No."

"They can do nothing else but shoot you."

"Oh, I recognise that," said Connolly.

Connolly had a great love of poetry. He knew by heart the poetry best worth keeping, Dick Tobin said, and he could always cap a quotation. He had also by heart all the social systems and Socialist theories of the world. He had been in Germany long before the War was thought of, and if he had not been in Russia he was in close touch with the Socialist party there. During those days before he was shot he made this remarkable forecast: "Within three years there will be hardly a crowned head in Europe."

He went to his death between two soldiers with fixed bayonets. His doctor, the indomitable Great-Heart who had been in the King's service and held his fealty to the King to the end, said to the rebel who was about to die:

"Connolly, do you forgive all your enemies?"

He replied, "I do."

"Connolly, will you pray for the men who are about to shoot you?"

He turned a sudden beaming smile on the soldiers.

"I pray for all brave men who do their duty according to their lights," he answered.

Connolly, who had handled large sums during the Rebellion, paying compensation to those whose property was seized, left exactly thirty shillings behind him. His wife and children had to be provided for. Dick Tobin took up the charge with characteristic enthusiasm, assisted by many distinguished people in Dublin, some of them sound Constitutionalists. Among those who subscribed handsomely were Sir Horace Plunkett and George Bernard Shaw. It was generally recognised that Connolly was "a most extraordinary man." A thousand pities no better use could have been made of such a man than to shoot him.

To take Connolly's family to his heart and into his home at that moment required a considerable amount of courage; Dick Tobin was unconscious of courage when he did it. Connolly had a very brilliant young son. I

think for a time Dick Tobin held him to a heart which the death of his own son had left empty and aching.

To put it on a low level it was a kind of social suicide. He did not care about that, but his wife and sister-in-law did; their hearts were in the War. He laughed about their attitude towards his poor protégés. Dear as they were to him and their friends, they could not have risen to that attitude of his. I am sure that in a way he understood and sympathised with them.

When the fund for the Connolly family had reached a considerable amount there was a question of the boy being sent to one of the best-known Dublin schools. We discussed it with a principal, who was not in favour of receiving him.

"Do you think the boys' parents would object?" we asked. It was before the tide of public opinion, which had been dead against the Rebellion, changed towards it.

"No," he replied, "but we know that he would carry the boys with him."

The Connolly family eventually went to America. There was a moment when the Chief Secretary's permission for them to go was cancelled by a subordinate. Dick Tobin bearded the Castle officials like a lion. A deaf man in a passion has a great advantage. He cannot hear what the other side says.

What he told me about the case of Connolly's children and his taking up their cause is worth relating. The tale ran something like this:—

"When I found that Connolly's children were destitute I went to a man I admire, though I differ from him in politics, and put the case before him. I said: 'The man is dead now and has expiated his offence, however you regard it. It will not be good for the English rule in Ireland if his wife and children are left to starve.' 'My dear Tobin,' he said, 'we can't shoot a man one day and provide for his widow and orphans the next.' So I went away to A. E., and we talked about it and then we set about getting up some money for the family. One

man gave £50, another £25, and some of the English Trades Unions subscribed generously.

"Mrs. Connolly was anxious to go to America, where she had friends. I saw Sir John Maxwell about it. He said: 'Can you guarantee that they will not allow themselves to be exploited against us?' I said I could guarantee that."

So the permission was given; but Sir John Maxwell was then leaving, and before they could sail the permission was withdrawn; and Dick Tobin, in a fine rage, went off to Dublin Castle to ask the reason why, quite oblivious of the fact that the days and his association with a famous rebel were dangerous.

The details of this interview I withhold, as several living people are involved. He came out of it with flying colours.

One of those days he met in the street a high Government official who was an old friend of his.

"Well, Tobin," he said, "I'm sorry to hear a very bad character of your friend, Connolly."

"On whose authority?"

"The authority of the police."

"Any definite charge?"

"No, but they are agreed that he is a bad man."

One can imagine the fine heat and fury with which Dick Tobin heard him.

"I left him at the St. Stephen's Green Club, and at the corner of Dawson Street I met a certain police sergeant whom I happened to know." (Dawson Street is, by the way, one of the chief Dublin thoroughfares.)

"We bade each other the time of day.

"'Sergeant,' said I, 'what kind of a man was James Connolly?'

"'He was a very bad man.'

"'What did he do? Did he drink?'

"'No: I don't think he drank.'

"'Was he unfaithful to his wife? Did he go after the girls?'

CHAPTER VIII

OVERHEARD

Some time during that Spring of 1919 Pat's company commander at Ledeghem came to see us. He was a very simple, heroic soldier. I have heard very dissimilar men praise with an equal warmth Mick O'Donnell. Pat had an unbounded admiration for him. He was in a Dublin hospital recovering from the seven wounds received that day at Ledeghem in binding up the wounded on an exposed hill while the German guns were firing at him point-blank.

I asked him why he had put his arm round Pat's neck that morning at the railway station at Ledeghem.

"He was so young," he said simply.

An entirely unself-conscious history of the War could only be compiled from the talk of soldiers over the fire at night, when they talk to each other and forget they have listeners. My two boys, one from East and one from West, talked together, and sometimes there was another soldier. I wrote down now and again things dropped in casual conversation when I was not supposed to be listening—I have mastered the capacity of writing and abstracting myself with other people talking about me—but sometimes I listened. Such things will have their value for the future, so I append some of them which seemed to me interesting enough to record. I shall not try to arrange them in order. They are just flashes from the War.

"One thing about the War was that you learnt to sleep anywhere. At home you couldn't sleep in an uncomfortable bed. There you slept fast in the trenches

with the shells bursting over your head. One night last September, on the road from Cassel to Poperinghe, I walked up against a column of French cavalry going up to the front line. It was broad moonlight, and every man was fast asleep on his horse, dead asleep. A night or two later I saw them coming back through Ypres, where I was billeted in the ruins of the old asylum."

Stories were told, grave and gay. One story was of a German officer who, during the Occupation, came to the A.P.M. and complained that he, being unarmed, had been held up by a drunken subaltern who had covered his feet with a revolver and compelled him to dance till the amusement palled. The A.P.M. said:

"If I parade the officers will you be able to identify him?"

"Yes."

"You understand that the War is at an end, that the officer's career is at an end if I punish him, as I must if you identify him; that he may be quite a good officer and a decent fellow, apart from this drunken freak?"

"I understand perfectly."

"You will not be satisfied unless I punish him?"

"I shall not be satisfied unless he is punished."

"Very well. The officers shall be paraded."

It was done, and the German officer walked slowly down the line, scrutinising each face closely. Before a very tall boyish young officer he paused for a perceptible moment. The boy flushed a deep painful red, while the German officer looked him up and down from the head to the feet and back again.

Then he turned to the A.P.M.

"I cannot identify him; he is not in this lot," he said.

Sometimes the stories were amusing. Pat had a story of a Colonel accused of cowardice in the face of the enemy. A Munster Fusilier was one of the witnesses.

"I seen the Colonel runnin' like blue hell along the duck-board," he said, "an' a Belgian hare run out before

him. He gev it a kick into the trench. 'Get out o' me way, me lad,' he sez, 'an' let the man that can run, run.'"

Toby told how the British Tommy's good nature offended native sentiment in the East. The Tommies could not endure to see an Arab riding on the ass while his wife trudged patiently behind.

"'Ere, Mayommed," they said,—it was the general name for the Arab,—"you just 'op it an' give the Missus a chance."

And pulling the Arab off, they gallantly helped the lady, most unwilling, into the saddle.

A pacifist hair-cutter said to one of the soldiers of the War: "I'll tell you wot I calls it, sir. It's h'all *I*pocrisy and Ooligginism."

Some of the things overheard were terrible enough.

There was one story of a trench falling in and burying a number of men. One young officer was buried completely, except for one side of his head and the ear, which were left uncovered. He heard the rescue party come along and one say, "That fellow's done for right enough," and they passed on. Someone was not satisfied and he was dug out; but the horror of it could not be forgotten. Sleep would not visit him and exhaustion brought him dreadful dreams. Drink was less dangerous than drugs, so he went to bed on whisky every night by the doctor's orders, and was never without a bottle of whisky at hand. A Grand Guignol story; but this was true.

Sufferings of which the official records took no notice dropped easily enough from the boys' lips. It was a spiritual suffering to clean boys brought up to circumstances of personal decency and refinement. The lice, the worms, the dead men, the smells: the intolerable things came into their speech. Things we shall never have to suffer happened to these children of ours.

Lord Linlithgow said to me when some such tale had been told:

"We can bear it: we couldn't have borne it before

the War. Our children will not listen to nor speak of such things."

But some things were revealed in a passionate moment. Some of them I will not tell even for this hardened generation. But a young officer who had been decorated for a very brave and brilliant action burst out, speaking intimately and passionately to one ear:

"Brave! I could have crawled like a worm. Not to put too fine a point on it, I felt as though my guts were leaving me, and I had the awful fear that I should get sick before the men.

"I went on blindly, cursing my fate, my teeth set to it, because whatever happened the men must not know. There was always the terror lest someone should know. Once in the desert, the men on a pint of water a day, with the desert sand under them and the desert sky above them, and only the bivvy between, cursed and were foul-mouthed all day. I knew they meant it to reach me, and I lay in my bivvy fighting against an almost uncontrollable impulse to rush out and curse them back again. I bit my lips and dug my nails into my hands till they bled in my effort to control myself. Then I heard the sergeant say:

"'Ere, you chaps, you just move your blank bivvies away from the orficer's tent. 'E don't want to 'ear your dirty mouths. 'E's got to stick it too.'

"'My God,' I said to myself, 'he knows!'"

I heard a young soldier say one day that the happenings of the War were only bearable because they were real happenings. In imagination they would have been intolerable, if one could have imagined them.

Another said that it was easier to fight in occupied country where life was going on with something of its ordinary circumstances than in the devastated country —Passchendaele, for instance, where all around was black desolation. I noticed they always spoke of Passchendaele as the ultimate Pit—it was killing to the most eager spirit.

The soldiers had a superstition that a shell never fell twice in the same place, so that when shelling began they rushed for an old shell-hole or one that had just been shelled.

They talked of their comrades. Pat had said that in the front line nothing but courage counted in the estimation of a man's fellows. Someone talked of an officer who had a very bad record as a man. He had the V.C. and had earned it, and for the time being the whole battalion, officers and men, looked up to him with the greatest admiration.

There was a young officer they used to talk about who was a great fighter. He was a strange, austere, devout person in private life, very young and fair, with a somewhat chilly manner. He had a fearful number of enemy casualties to his account, but he shot men because they were the enemy and it was his business, not because he had any animosity against them. Some of his brother-officers, at least, adored him. Because of his extra-ordinary courage he was something of a chartered libertine with his superiors. For a time after a disastrous day which had wiped out the senior officers he commanded the battalion till the new Colonel came out from England. During his term of command it was a glorious reign of youth in the battalion, for the junior officers were appointed to all the positions. His dream was of a War in which senior officers should engage each other.

Then there came a Colonel new to the Western front and all the boys were retired again. One day the new Colonel issued an order that the transport should follow the guns into action. (I think that was it, but I write from memory.) He gave his orders to O'B. (shall we say?).

"You can tell the Major to do it," said O'B. "I won't."

"And why not, pray?" asked the aghast Colonel.

"Because the transport will be blown to bits."

"But we always did that in Salonika."

"You're not in Salonika now," said O'B. easily.

The orders were issued without intervention of his, and of course the transport was blown to bits.

O'B. never suffered for such insubordination. His magnificent record carried him clean over everything. Once the thorny subject of Irish politics came up at the Mess. O'B. was a very good Irishman. There was a somewhat heated argument, with the Colonel and O'B. for protagonists.

"Captain O'B.," said the Colonel in despair, "shall I never be able to make you see my point of view?"

"I'm damned sure you won't," replied O'B., to the huge joy of the Mess.

There was another time when troops were advancing after a battle, indistinct through the smoke of the barrage. "It is all right," said the Colonel easily. "They are our own men."

"Sir," said O'B., "did you ever see British troops advancing carrying their overcoats over their arms? They are Germans."

They were Germans. O'B. could even put his Colonel in the wrong with impunity.

There was a macabre story of the same O'B. when he was in command. The battalion was waiting to "go over." There was tea going in the dug-out. A much older officer came in with chattering teeth. "Give me something to drink," he said. "A man has just been blown up beside me. I'm all dodo."

"I don't expect my officers to be all dodo," said O'B., with a cold and critical glance.

He handed the unfortunate man a cup of tea, but his hand shook so badly that the tea was spilt over his tunic.

"Ugh!" he said, "his brains are all over me!"

O'B. lifted the tunic and looked at it: "Only tea-leaves," he said quietly.

They were only tea-leaves.

The soldiers had the school-boy way of laughing at

each other. The tale of the "little 'un" at the rest-camp is worth telling among the things a quiet listener overheard, sitting in the chimney-corner while the boys talked, or heard in a twilit walk under the mountains.

It was demoralising weather: Summer had caught them while they waited, the parched, pitiless Eastern Summer. There was a sandstorm every other day and life was possible only while a man lay in the Canal to his neck, imminently in danger of sunstroke even though he kept his head wet. The solar topee was the order of the day even in tents; and men loathed the glare and the crawling flies and each other, and the smells and the monotonous song of the fellaheen, as they opened and closed the bridge: "How many days, how many nights to Cairo?" All around where there was not Canal lay the desert. There was a vulture hanging almost motionless in the sky. The nights were hardly cooler than the days.

Some men thought of the long cool Summer at home, with a grey splash of rain and the hills wreathed in mist. These as they crossed the sand from the water saw far-off the mirage—a glittering lake, palm trees, green fields; only mirage.

Unbracing weather. Everyone was in drill, and unbraced at that, from the Commandant to the youngest subaltern. No one cared if the camp was insanitary; it was no one's business: it was no one's business to interfere when the cooking was poisonous and the food unfit for consumption. The inertia of the hot weather and the long wait was over them all.

When—a very young officer arrived at the camp. He was complete even to his cane and gloves. The unbraced dishevelled ones looked at him sleepily. "The only Regimental Officer I've seen in the Camp," the Commandant remarked, without energy to follow his example.

The "Quarter-bloke" and the sergeant grinned at each other when it came to the "little un's" turn to inspect, as orderly officer.

He was such a very young "little 'un" and so severely regimental. Easy enough to put *him* off! But the "little 'un" had a bleak and a critical eye. It rested with disapproval on the meat covered with flies.

"Where's your wire-netting?"

The "Quarter-bloke" and the sergeant glanced at the empty window-space as though they had discovered for the first time that the netting was missing.

The "little 'un" wrote in his book and went on: "Potatoes unfit for human food. Have these been inspected? Any report made?"

Apparently no report had been made. Somebody was going to get into trouble besides the "Quarter-bloke" and the sergeant.

"These shelves should be washed down every day with disinfectants. Where are your disinfectants? The place is in a filthy condition."

Again the "little 'un" wrote in his book, while the "Quarter-bloke" and the sergeant looked at each other—without humour this time.

At Mess the "little 'un" remarked: "The sanitation of this camp is scandalous. With so many R.A.M.C. officers about. . . ." Six men jumped up and declared heatedly that they were not responsible. The "little 'un" turned a bleak eye on them and remarked that there would soon be an epidemic.

"Of course I had to take cognisance of the youngster's reports," said the Commandant to the Major. "I've given the Quartermaster and his staff a dressing-down as well as other people. Drifting to typhoid we all were. Rotten effect this weather and place have on the morale! How that youngster stands it I don't know. He won't put on drill: thinks it inconsistent with the dignity of a regimental officer."

Stories other than of the War came to my fireside. Some of them I may not yet tell, but there are others I may. The priests were always among the good story-tellers. One told me that an old man, a parishioner,

had confessed to him that he had spoken belittlingly of a priest. "I suppose that was me, John," he said. "Not to put too fine a point on it, your Reverence, you're the man."

Another priest told me this story *à propos* of two brothers, whom we shall call Murphy, comfortably placed in public life, who belonged to a family of extreme, not to say unctuous piety. I had expressed my intolerance of the type, whereupon the priest told me this story of a townsman of the excellent brothers. He had been rather a bad lot and he was dying. His wife was by his bed. "We shall meet again, Pat," she said; "our parting will not be for long." "Don't you believe that," said the dying man; "this is the end of it for you and me." The poor wife pleaded against the cruel decision, but he was adamant. "We shall never meet again," he said, "for you are going with the Murphys, and I am going with the ——" I really daren't tell who he was going with, but this is a story that much pleases Irish people, especially those who know the Murphys. I hope it may not sound profane in English ears.

The same priest, who overflows with good stories, told me that they had had an American Jesuit staying at the house of his Order. He was preaching on the Stations of the Cross.

"The Fourth Station, my dear brethren, shows us Veron*i*ca, erroneously called by the ignorant Ver*o*nica—bringing a towel to wipe the Face of Our Lord."

The priests, especially the regular clergy, are great story-tellers and have a schoolboy delight in poking fun at each other. An old Jesuit said of a brother he specially disliked, "Many men are asses, but he is a *dangerous* ass," which greatly delighted the Community-Room.

Here is a story which I have heard emanated from a certain famous Jesuit. Two Jewish newly-married couples of his acquaintance were in a railway collision.

Meeting one of the bridegrooms later in an East End street, the reverend gentleman said he hoped there were no evil results of the accident. "No; me and Sarah vas quite safe. Poor Levi! he and Rebecca got hurt. It was five hundred pound. In the gonfusion I drampled on Sarah's face. It was very lucky. That was dree hundred to us."

When this story was told, a young soldier who was listening capped it with another. A visitor to a Board School offered threepence to the one of a boys' class who should answer most satisfactorily the question: "Who was the most famous man that ever lived?" The class was all at sea. After a few seconds a Jew boy, who had been apparently having a violent struggle with himself, held up his hand and blurted out in an anguish: "Business is business. It vas Christ."

I hope no one will take such stories as these as irreverent. There is no irreverence in the minds of those who tell them, but there is intimacy, the intimacy that does not fear irreverence.

Father John, the sanest and gayest of the Sons of St. Francis, who was a chaplain in Palestine in the War, brought me a story in which the laugh is against the Auxiliaries. During a military raid in his neighbourhood Father John talked to the soldiers. They were taciturn English soldiers. He asked one of them what class of men the Auxiliaries were, they being then a new force. One soldier's tongue was loosed. "Well, you see, Sir," he said, "it's like this. These yere Auxiliaries, bein' officers, naturally, they ain't got any discipline."

Then there was Shane Leslie's delicious story of the Jesuit College and the lay-brother reading aloud from the "Lives of the Saints" during a meal in the Refectory. The lay-brother read out monotonously the opening of a new chapter:

"St. Jerome goes up to the Desert with his Missus." One can imagine the sudden eagerness of the boys. It was the good brother's rendering of MSS.

We had this story from a Unionist landlord. At Fairyhouse Races he was standing near a couple of old farmers. "What horse is goin' to win this race?" asked one of the other. "A good Irish horse an' none o' your planted wans." ("That was a hit at me," said the story-teller.) "What's his name?" "Irish Republic." "An' his colours?" "The yellow, white and green." "What's his breedin'?" "He's by Irishman out of Broken Promise."

Again there came in a letter from Lord Linlithgow: "We've had ——" (a famous prima-donna) "staying with us. She was perfectly charming, but she never even referred obliquely to her beautiful voice. The last morning at breakfast I said to her: 'I've often heard, Madame, that singers warble in their bath, so I waited outside your bathroom door this morning, hoping to catch a note, but not a sound did I hear, only the bump when you slipped up over the soap.'"

She ought to have sung for him for that audacity, because, by all accounts, she is one to appreciate it.

Someone else brought me an echo of the old Parnell Split days, in which I was so passionately interested. Father Nicholas Murphy of Kilmanagh was one of the few priests who stood by Parnell. A man of exemplary life, his Bishop, Dr. Brownrigg, had no handle against him, besides which the position of an Irish parish priest is almost an impregnable one; but he was very much in the Bishop's black books. At a clergy conference the Bishop denounced Father Nicholas by name, but Father Nicholas was apparently absorbed in reading his Office and heard nothing. He had a parrot that followed him like a dog. It used to hop after him about the church, and even follow him on to the altar, and now and again the parrot would stop and say very piously, to the delight of all hearers: "Say a little prayer for the soul of Parnell. Ah, don't forget poor Charlie's soul!"

The Bishop, visiting the parishes of his diocese, was

obliged to accept Father Nicholas's hospitality for a few nights. The parrot had been carefully shut up in Father Nicholas's room, with strict injunctions to the household that he was not to escape; but one day when Father Nicholas was out the Bishop, going along the corridor, heard a queer monotonous voice talking behind a closed door. He opened the door and looked in. The parrot became violently excited and burst into shrieks of "Up, Parnell! Up, Parnell!" trailing off into, "Say a little prayer for poor Charlie's soul. Ah, do say a little prayer for poor Charlie's soul!"

The Bishop went away angrier than ever with Father Nicholas.

One day I heard Pamela ask a young Dublin Fusilier the meaning of the regimental motto: "Spectamur Agendo." He translated it freely—"Don't Bleat." What an invaluable motto to set up in Parliamentary assemblages, at council meetings, public dinners, gatherings of all kinds where men—and women—make speeches. It might even be set up in many pulpits, with great benefit to the congregations. "Don't Bleat!" It is an admirable motto.

CHAPTER IX

THE RETURN

We had thought only to choose a house that would suit us. In fact we rejected one or two houses at Killiney, little thinking that the house-famine at its most acute stage was to be on us in a few months' time, and that we were setting out on an indefinite period of being "on the world," living in other people's houses, without our books, our papers, all the dear inanimate things which become part of one's life from associations.

A good many people wanted to see us in England and Scotland that Summer, so, as we had to evacuate Kenah Hill at the end of May, I had the happy idea of removing my household to London for the Summer. Where should I go but to Ealing, which had a friend's face for me, where my happy married life had been spent?

We possess a most excellent relative who is never so happy as when he is doing for you all the things you should do for yourself. Through him we struck a very charming and quaint landlady. She and an adored brother had kept house together in a little Ealing road, and, he being dead, she was letting her house, turning away applicants as fast as they came because she judged them not worthy to inhabit her precious and sacred house. She would probably not have let at all if she had not happened to have read some of my books and liked them. Hearing of me as a prospective tenant, she immediately took a guinea a week off the rent. Once or twice the bargain was nearly off because of my excellent relative having allowed the hideous thing, business, to be even mentioned. It wounded her terribly to suggest that she *could* let her house as a matter of business. On

these occasions I had to write propitiatory letters to smooth matters down, but we were not quite sure of the house till we got into it.

Just before we left Ireland we paid a hasty visit to Lady de Vesci at Abbey Leix, where the bluebells were all out, wonderful bluebells grown in the slime of the primeval forest, tall as lilies and nearly as large, in all the most enchanting shades of purple, lavender, rose and white. I have never seen such bluebells. They were nearly over; but that made their colour more beautiful, as heather is most beautiful when it pales to rose. Soon the bluebells would be gone and their place taken by the white bloom of the wild garlic, which already was popping up among them. From the windows of the house even purblind eyes were aware of those sheets of colour under the dazzling green of the young leaves; for a background there was last year's bracken of a beautiful rust-colour that had a thought of rose in it.

We had tea one afternoon among the bluebells. Mrs. Aubrey Herbert was there and her beautiful quaint children. We talked European politics. The Versailles Conference was then sitting, and I discovered what Englishmen of affairs were saying about the terms of the Treaty. One morning we went to the Rath of Mullaghmast, where the O'More, Chieftain of Offaly, being invited to a banquet by the English Lord Deputy, was slain, with all his followers.

The atmosphere of Abbey Leix was Irish enough. Lady de Vesci, born a Scotswoman, is an Irishwoman by her heart's choice. Ireland was never spoken of in that house except with a passionate tenderness; and at the Rath, where none of the country people would come by night, and hardly alone by day, Lady de Vesci recalled the plays they had had with the Leinster children as Irish Chieftains, and how after those entertainments her own Mary, walking in her sleep, would be heard chanting:

"O'er the Rath of Mullaghmast
What bleeding spectres passed!"

If one's heart was sore about Irish troubles that was a house to go to. Ireland had "taken them," when others of her own blood were insensible to her glamour.

It was a happy Summer at No. 2, Amherst Road, Ealing. We arrived to a hot spell, but the little garden was in its first fresh greenness and the briar roses were just opening over a tiny pergola. At the end of the garden, beyond a low, dividing wall, were the grounds of a big house, which lay also at one side of the garden, so that we had only suburban neighbours on the other side. We soon discovered that the garden was a Bird Sanctuary. There were tits' nests in the trees; and, in a window of the drawing-room, there was a most ingenious device by which a bird might enter for food and water and depart again, being secured by a tiny trap-door from possible attack by a prowling cat.

The little house was very clean and bright, obviously a house of gentle-people, and there were pictures of the beloved brother everywhere. He was an old naval man. Someone said to us that Summer: "Captain H. was so continually getting up to give his seat to some woman, or he was so often standing deferentially listening to some bore or other, that I can't recall that he ever sat down at all." I said joyfully: "Let us put up his picture in the Tube for all men to see."

Apparently the house and its contents lived to our landlady, whose name was Juliet. She must have carried the name well in her youth, for at seventy she was still beautiful, and with a delusive air of youth and stateliness, but we saw very little of her: she was away nearly all the time of our tenancy. Perhaps it would not have done to be overlooked by her to whom the house was a shrine.

The clock in the drawing-room talked like a clock in a fairy-tale. Upon it was a card with an inscription: "Wind me every eighth day, very gently. Do not

handle me roughly, and let me stand level, or I shall suffer horribly. Above all do not overwind me, for that would cause me untold harm."

A bell-pull bore the inscription: "Pull me down gently but firmly, and let me go quickly, but not roughly." While over the telephone in the hall was: "In case of fire ring me up —— Ealing Fire Station. If you want a cab ring me up ——" and so on. But the bedroom blinds in the front—at the back we were only overlooked by the birds—were most amusing: "Do not neglect to draw me, I implore you, while you are dressing, as you are overlooked by the neighbours."

The neighbours were all irreproachable people, and I think all ladies, except a comfortable married doctor. I don't think he would have played Peeping Tom.

Ealing indeed showed me a friend's face, although people had wondered at my going back there. I loved it the better for its associations. Of course I found many changes. Perivale Fields were no more fields, but built upon, as far as the houses dared go because of the Winter floodings of the Brent. There was a terrible little Park where there had been the field-path and the turnstile gate and the stream that used to rush out so furiously and swirl along the dyke in wet weather. Codger, one of the most beloved of Irish terrier puppies, in the old happy days, used to charge that great gush of water and emerge, half-choked, in a cloud of spray, shaking the drops from his coat. We used to call it Cuchullin Fighting the Waves.

Along that path went the padding footsteps of many of my dogs. Paudeen, that tiny rag of a dog, compound of Irish terrier and poodle, with the wistful appeal of the one and the tricks of the other, used to lead here his string of dogs. We always went walking with six or seven dogs whose names we did not know. Presumably their owners were in town of week-days and Paudeen had invited them to join the party. We used to pick them up as we went by the houses. They were

always sitting outside, wagging their tails, as we came up, and they would give me a friendly lick of the hand before joining the procession. We might have been professional dog-leaders. When we met them with their lawful owners on Sundays they never knew us, and we did not give them away. On the Monday they were as friendly as ever.

There, by the gate, Paudeen was once held up by a girls' school that broke the crocodile to kiss him. A round, delicious, fat little girl could hardly bear to give him up. He was tolerant, but desperately bored. He was incredibly popular always, but his glances at us said that he had not asked for it.

There, in the early years of my married life, went Pat and I together. Pat was a noble St. Bernard. Perivale Fields were lonely then. It was before the Golf Links. The larks used to shoot up in amazing numbers into the sky, even through the Winter. The black pigs, that were a relic of the Bishop of London's swine-forest in the days of Alfred, still roamed the fields and hunted for acorns in the Winter. Still were there remains of the old Middlesex lanes.

Pat used to forge ahead, coming back now and again to make sure that I was safe. His eyes were not good. Once in the midst of the wooden bridge—cut deep with intertwined hearts and darts and lovers' initials—he met a suspicious-looking tramp and turned back to walk by my side.

The children knew those fields well, too; and one little child of ours was laid to rest in Perivale Churchyard, that innocent God's Acre by the tiny church with its eleventh-century tower. Why, indeed, should Ealing not show me a friend's face?

We found houses and another dusty, scrubby little park a-top of Hanger Hill, where the fields used to be by the Reservoir—all very much changed from my memory of it as it was when I wrote giving up our first little Ealing house in Mount Avenue:

THE RETURN

"Not soon shall I forget: a sheet
Of golden water, cold and sweet,
The new moon with her head in veils
Of silver and the nightingales.

A wain of hay came up the lane—
O fields I shall not walk again,
And trees I shall not see, so still
Against a sky of daffodil!

Fields where my happy heart had rest
And where my heart was heaviest,
I shall remember them at peace,
Drenched in moon-silver like a fleece.

The shining water, sweet and cold,
The moon, half-silver and half-gold,
The dew upon the grey grass-spears;
I shall remember them with tears."

It was the Ealing of 1893 to which I came from Ireland a bride. In May 1894 I had heard the last nightingale sing there.

I had not been in England since before the War, Ealing I had not revisited for many years; so, of course, there were changes. In 1919 it was still terribly overgrown, the neglect of the War years showing in the dense greenery, behind which the houses must have been very gloomy.

The streets were another matter in the beautiful weather. Dublin has always dressed dingily out-of-doors. The climate perhaps; perhaps because the coat and skirt suit modest purses. Ealing Broadway was like a Glade of Butterflies, for all the flutter and gaiety of the shopping women and their children. The women were in white skirts and sports-coats of every colour conceivable. The bare golden heads and sandalled feet of the children were delicious. It was as though all the flowers of the June gardens had escaped and flown into the streets.

My early experience of the post-War manners in the shops depressed me so much that I said I never would

go shopping again. The indifference, the almost contempt of those who served, were appalling to one accustomed to shopping as a gay and ever-fresh adventure, as it is in Ireland. The customers were once the tyrants, the shop-people the crawling slaves. Now all that was changed. The persons behind the counter were entirely indifferent as to whether you took or left their merchandise. You stood humbly waiting to attract their attention. I thought to myself that they were getting their own back on the haughty ladies of pre-War years.

Your marketing done, you staggered home under prodigious burdens. To secure a minute portion of meat or butter was a compliment. Ration cards were still in use. You remembered the time of the competing tradespeople for your custom, how you were mobbed when you moved to a new house by supplicating tradesmen, hat in hand, the determination that you should run a book, that orders should be called for, which invariably broke down the stern resolve of a very busy woman to do her own marketing and pay as she went.

It was very different this paying on the nail and carrying home your own purchases. But oh, if it had prevailed in the careless young years, how rich one would have been!

We very soon got behind that inhuman demeanour of the shop-people. To say, "Where did you get that decoration and for what?" or to put your hand on somebody's black sleeve and say, "Ah, I am sorry," made the whole world of difference. I got the essence of Kipling's "Me!" from a man slicing bacon. "It do seem poor business after what you've been doin'," he said. I heard all about the widowing of the greengrocer's daughter, whom I remembered as a tall slight young thing in the incredible golden years before the War. The stony indifference suddenly gave way. We had to turn hastily and gaze into a basket of gooseberries till she could recover herself. The fishmonger, who had

put me back in my place in the queue, from which I had ignorantly strayed, on my first arrival, melted at a compliment to the good looks of his young soldier sons. Thereafter we were friends. He cashed my cheques to save my going to the bank; and we found we agreed in politics and on the feminist question. Despite the sons, who favoured himself in the matter of good looks, he had a great belief in the efficiency of women and its value in public life.

I believe that "the Irish way" counts more with the English than with any other people in the world. The Irish way in England is a conquering way. A thousand pities it is ever forced or forces itself from its suavity!

We found Irish neighbours at Amherst Road. Opposite to us two delightful Miss Hartys; Lady Jane Kenny-Herbert, who always came in holding out her hands with "My dear compatriot!" When Irish people meet in England they don't bother about difference in politics. We had literary neighbours, besides Conal O'Riordan, who was absent that Summer. They were Muriel Stuart and Theodore Maynard. Our dear Irish neighbours over the way showed us many loving Irish kindnesses. They were all exiles, only they had grown into the groove and could not go back, though they longed to. We used to urge on them how rich the Irish life was: how they would stand out in Ireland; how dead-levelling was the life of the London suburb. But they had got into the groove, and they had not the energy to break away.

There was an old Irish gentleman who wanted to come in and hug us when we flew a big Irish flag for the Peace Commemorations. The Irish were always bobbing up. You couldn't buy a chiffon or get your hands manicured but what the one who served you had touch with Ireland. In the latter capacity I found a young lady whose grandmother had been Maria Edgeworth's god-daughter. The family still possessed the great Maria's Bible, with its inscription to her god-daughter. A lady by whom

I stood at the bank-counter one day, to whom I said, hearing her name, "That sounds good Irish," turned on me a flushed and smiling face. "It is, thank God," she said, "and so is its owner."

Many times we struck our compatriots in public conveyances. Once it was a niece of a well-known Irish County Court Judge and one of the best-known officials in Ireland. Again, it was the daughter of a T.C.D. Don, who leant out from her place down the 'bus to say, "Your speech is music in my ears." Another time it was a comfortable woman in later middle age, who was still Irish and Catholic at heart, although, married to the best of English Protestant husbands, she had lost touch with country and religion. Imagine my being told all that, and with wet eyes, between Oxford Circus and Notting Hill Gate!

So close, so warm were these foregatherings that they might have led to friendships if there had not been the irrevocable stopping-places where one or the other got out. The odd thing is how much warmer and more eager were those brief, casual touchings than the pre-arranged meetings, which so often end in failure.

CHAPTER X

THE PEACE SUMMER

THE golden Summer was one long record of visiting and being visited. It was good to be back in the places where we had been happy. Nothing could have been more restful than the little house, where I am sure the spirit of the old sea-captain lingered, and the love of the brother and sister sweetened the air.

I began to write again in the little arbour at the end of the garden where one might almost have been in the country. There, one Sunday morning, a wonderful thing happened. The tiniest of little birds was clinging to my skirt. I thought it had fallen from the nest, because of the frantic cheeping of the parent birds; but soon that distressful sound was all over the garden, and I discovered the baby tits clinging on to everything the little claws could grasp—hanging leaves, twigs, the bars of the pergola, even my footstool, had its clinging tit.

I tried at first ignorantly to put the little birds back in the nests, but I soon discovered that there was method in this madness. The next day there was not a tit: they had all flown.

We had missed seeing London in War-time. I can remember the children in Mayo sighing regretfully for the Zeppelin raids they had missed. We had not even grown used to aeroplanes and were still excited up to the time we left Mayo at the sound of a 'plane. Now there was an endless flight of them, all day long, over the little garden, on their way to the aerodrome somewhere Ruislip way.

We found Perivale Fields—what was left of them—

still in the hands of the plot-holders, who worked there vigorously on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings. The poor dogs were all muzzled then, but the plot-holders would occasionally unmuzzle their dogs on the plot, taking it as their castle. I remember one old couple who had given up their annual jaunt to Margate because Prince couldn't go with them.

"There!" said Prince's mistress, keeping an eye out for a casual policeman, "as I says to my old man, if you can't give up an 'oliday for your dorg, you don't deserve to 'ave a dorg. An' my old man 'e says, Right you are, M'riar! But there, Prinny did use to enjoy 'is change to Margate, 'e did!"

It was one of the many casual friendships which came about because of our sympathy with the muzzled dogs.

We had been eight years away from London and there were many old ties to pick up. Some of the friends were gone further than we could follow them, except in our love. St. Benedict's, Ealing, was full of memories of Father Gilbert Dolan. Of those who stayed we saw the Meynells—always first—and in that golden May the reunion with these old and tried friends had the poignant sweetness of the dead-and-gone Mays when we were all young and together.

Frank Matthew came for a long afternoon in the garden. We saw May Sinclair, and Marie Belloc Lowndes, and others of the old friends.

We had gone to London with an intention of paying visits, and our first visit was to Knebworth. It was a visit I had been asked to pay by Lord Lytton's father, "Owen Meredith," as long ago as 1886. It had been prevented by his appointment as Viceroy of India. It was very hot weather and we dined and lunched in the garden. We talked poetry and politics in a room near the pinnacled roof (that strange manifestation of Oriental taste on the part of Bulwer Lytton), while Lady Lytton sat in the midst of a rose-coloured satin quilt which she was embroidering, looking very charming. We talked

of A. E.'s poetry, a common love of which Lady Lytton said had been one of the things to draw her and Lord Lytton together. It was all very informing and interesting talk, but, like many conversations of that Summer, it is too near to talk about. Lord Lytton threshed out the whole situation as it stood at the moment, when the Versailles Treaty had just been signed, in a way which was a compliment to my intelligence.

There was a very charming Miss Plowden there the next day, an aunt of Lady Lytton's, who lived close at hand. The aunts of that generation were certainly delightful people, intelligent, sympathetic, receptive, highly educated and accomplished. My walk and talk in the gardens at Knebworth with Miss Plowden was certainly one of the best happenings of that good Summer. She will know how I remember her and how fragrant she is in my mind, if she reads this. Certainly the much-decried Victorian Age produced a beautiful type of lady.

We were to have gone on to our old friends, the Rivingtons, at Chipperfield, from Knebworth, but we could not get the connection, so we came back to Ealing unexpectedly, to find the house locked up and empty: a friend who was staying with us had taken the servants out for a "jolly." We had to stick by our luggage, and we did not yet know our dear hospitable Irish neighbours, who had been away when we moved in. Tea was out of the question, we admitted with sorrowful resignation. It was blazing hot, but one of us thanked Heaven that we were on the shady side of the road. I had eaten nothing but fruit and salad at the lunch in the Knebworth garden, not discovering what was under the green stuff. Being so blind, I am apt to go hungry unless I have a sympathetic and observant host, or am taken in hand by a kind butler. I have sometimes had a host like Lord Aberdeen at the Viceregal Lodge, who, however far off I was seated, would discover that I had had nothing but the garnishing, and would recall dish after dish, to my

confusion. We had arrived at 5.30 and we sat on our trunks till 9.20. The younger of us was not philosophical. She ramped up and down the road, where the infrequent passers-by stopped and stared curiously at us. She made several burglarious entries into the house, performing miracles in the way of pushing back hasps and lifting windows which had stuck. Only to find in every case that the door of the room she entered was locked on the outside.

In these entries she got plastered thick with London soot. For the greater part of that long *séance*, made more bitter, she said, by my philosophic calm, she had to sit with her sooty paws held away from her : her face was like a Christy Minstrel's ; as for her garments, they did not bear discussion. It was no wonder that in time the police became interested.

It was not philosophic calm on my part ; it was only the exhaustion of hunger. But the truants came at last, when the younger of us had exhausted her bitter speculations as to where they had gone, winding up with a theatre, or a dance which would keep them out till midnight. They had only gone for a long tram-ride, just about the time we had arrived at the station.

Pat was by this time at Aldershot, and we had frequently the delight of his turning up on Saturday evenings unexpectedly, so happy to be with us for a few hours' leave. It was worth the parting with him on the Sunday evening. Once we arrived with Horace Thorogood, of the *Star*, a dear new friend then, a dear old friend now, to have the door opened to us by Pat, his tunic off, his sleeves rolled above his elbow, perspiring with the effort of producing an article for the *Star*. He had arrived during our absence, and I am sure his appearance of energy must have impressed the Editor.

Our next visit was to the Pitt-Riverses at their ancient Manor House of Hinton St. Mary, in Dorset. They were friends of the Claremorris days. Captain George Pitt-Rivers looked a golden youth, and I have referred to

him as such in *The Years of the Shadow*. He was in reality a philosopher, and was much annoyed at being called a golden youth. He and I became good friends. He said I was always healing the wounds inflicted by my young daughter, for the political discussions were already pretty heated, the Irish question being always the bone of contention, and my family having a passion for argument denied to me. I was flattered by his friendship, as I always am by the friendship of the young. Mrs. Pitt-Rivers was a joy to look at and had brains and character as well as beauty and charm. We were called Sinn Feiners in that circle, as in many others in England, and no one ever seemed surprised. Mrs. Pitt-Rivers, the elder, a most beautiful woman—she was the grand-daughter of that Duchess of Somerset who had won the Prize of Beauty at the famous Eglinton Tournament, and so had Sheridan blood—looked at Pamela with great calmness on being told she was a Sinn Feiner, and asked, "But wouldn't you *like* to be English?" She looked like a French Marquise of the great days, her beautiful hair, worn with a suggestion of powder, drawn back from her forehead and piled high on her head; or she might have been a portrait of her beautiful grandmother come to life.

She had motored over from Rushmore, the hospitality of which she was anxious to offer us, saying we had been so kind to her son and daughter-in-law at Claremorris, but we were not able to accept it then for some reason, though we went to Rushmore for an afternoon while still it was being restored to its old state, having been used as a hospital during the War, and everything still was in confusion.

Our host and hostess motored us over to St. Giles's for our next visit. Lord Shaftesbury was the kind "General" of the Claremorris days; and St. Giles's was a very happy house to visit. It was full of happy occupation from morning to night; there was never a dragging moment in it. Lord Shaftesbury played tennis

as tirelessly as he had done at Claremorris, and as there was a hard court, tennis was independent of the weather. In the evening he sang for us, or we played bridge. Few singers have given me as much delight as he; he has the temperament for Irish songs. There is a folk-song he used to sing, the words by Alice Milligan, the music, traditional, arranged by Mrs. Milligan Fox, the memory of which haunts me, coming out of another life as it seems. "Annie Laurie"—"I'm Sitting on the Stile, Mary,"—"Must I go Bound while you go Free?"—"She is far from the Land"—all such beautiful old simple, poignant things he sang, and, like him who listened to the song of Wordsworth's Solitary Reaper, one carries those songs in one's heart for many a day after.

Religion was in the atmosphere of that house, where God was never forgotten. It was an ideally kind house for the guest. The children were brought up to the old-fashioned virtues of kindness, courtesy, considerateness, and all the qualities that go to make up a beautiful hospitality.

The Saturday we were there Peace was signed. I can remember the bells ringing out from the church-tower, which rang the Angelus thrice daily, just as we used to hear it in Ireland. Downstairs someone was playing the Te Deum on the organ in the music-room. I can recall it, the warmth and sweet smell of the beautiful golden evening, the deep peace of the green park outside, the room flooded with light, the sweetness of the great bowl of pink roses on the dressing-table, reflected in the oval gilt mirror, which had a Cupid at the top letting down ribbons, or so I seem to remember it.

The great hour had struck upon the clock. Peace had come to earth again, and the world was receiving it with a full heart. Alas! it was well the troubled future was hidden from us.

The next morning as we motored to Wimborne, the nearest Catholic church being there, ten miles from

St. Giles's, flags were hung out everywhere. There was a notable absence of the Irish flag, as might have been expected in Dorset, but we leant forward to hail with joy two Irish flags floating over one little house.

The signs of the English Revolution had begun to show, even in quiet, beautiful Dorset, with its air of peace—that is to say, the first part of the Revolution as it affected the English aristocracy. We stayed in several great houses that Summer. In every case the family lived in a wing of the house and all the rest was shut up. You were taken into shrouded and blinded rooms to be shown the great treasures of the house.

The town of Shaftesbury had been sold to the townspeople by Lord Stalbridge while we were with the Pitt-Rivers at Hinton St. Mary. The Pitt-Rivers were selling the little town of Cerne Abbas, with its chalk Man of Cerne lying out on the hillside. Cerne, when we motored there one day, was fast asleep in the sun. Nothing could be more sleepy than some of these little English country towns. There were some beautiful remains at Cerne. The place was under the influence of that weird Man of Cerne, to whom still some pagan rites and ceremonies are paid. Cerne might have been as old and fast asleep as he, and as steeped in an ancient wizardry.

I don't know who bought Cerne, or if it passed from the family of Pitt-Rivers. It might well have passed to worse masters, as so many of those places did. Not always, even when the townspeople or the tenants bought, was the profit to seller or buyer. There was often the middleman, who had the best of the bargain.

In England landlords had their duties and in the main fulfilled them. There was no such river as flowed between Irish landlords and their tenants. I went round with Lord Shaftesbury one day to see his cottages. They were villas rather than cottages as we know them, of five or six rooms, well and conveniently built, set in pleasant orchard gardens. The rent was a shilling or

two shillings a week. No one need have scorned to live in them.

But even in quiet Dorset the Revolution stirred, and those who had long sat in the places of the mighty were facing the Revolution sadly but without murmuring. It was not going to be a bloody Revolution; it was to be accomplished quietly, and the deposed were to depart with such a smiling dignity that the Revolution would be almost unheard and unseen. They took it quite as well on the whole as the aristocrats of the French Revolution, who jested in the tumbrils and at the guillotine; though jesting at solemn moments is for the Celt and Latin rather than for the Anglo-Saxon.

On our way back to Ealing, driving from Waterloo to Paddington, we saw very few Irish flags, so the next day we set out a-hunting for bunting. After many disappointments we succeeded in getting a very fine Irish flag, which we hung from an upper window, where it took the Summer breeze gloriously. It provoked our English neighbours to much bigger Union Jacks than they had originally intended, so the road was very gay; and some of our Irish neighbours, who were obliged to show the Union Jack for fear of offending their servants and neighbours, clasped their hands while they gazed at our flag and sighed: "Oh, it is *so* good to see it!"

The Irish flag, by this time, had a separate and special significance, unlike the time of the King's Coronation, when it had been sold in strings with the flags of the world, and few of the people who hung out the flags could have told what country each belonged to, beyond the Union Jack and the Royal Standard, which flapped over every little suburban dwelling, quite regardless of the Royal prerogative.

We thought it great fun to welcome some of our imperially-minded friends "under the flag." It was rather a trial, I'm afraid, to our poor landlady, who happened to be in the neighbourhood for a few days and could not keep from looking tearfully on her sacred

house; but if she felt the flag a profanation she made no protest.

I wrote an article in the *Star* on our adventures in seeking for an Irish flag. A day or two later I received a letter from an address in South London.

"MISS KATHARINE TYNAN.

"DEAR MADAM,

I've read (when on holiday in Ireland) an article in the *Star* re the scarcity of the Irish Flag in London. Will you accept from me a Real Irish Flag? Bunting of the best! I would not sell an Irish Flag: I regard it as sacred. Pray let me know if you will accept; and may God bless you for your Irish heart."

The letter had a very Irish signature, and was headed:

"Up with the Green!
The bonny Irish Green!
We'll fight for the Green till we die."

Of course I accepted, and so we had two flags.

London was tremendously full just then, and one was very glad to have the shelter of one's own little house (*pro tem.*).

Lord Linlithgow, back from America, where he had most kindly arranged some business for me amid the hurry of his own, came with Lady Linlithgow to lunch the day after our return. His American business had been to arrange for a visit of sixty Scottish skilled workers to America to study the methods of American production. It had been a flying visit, but he brought back some good stories. One was that the pointer was known in America as "a stiff-tailed smell dog." Very graphic, when one remembers a pointer at work. He was still the spirit of laughter we remembered him at Claremorris, when it seemed that dullness could not live in his company.

The cook had complained at Brookhill that, because

of the inhuman way, common to old Irish houses, of immuring the servants within a wall of stone, she had never seen anything of him but his feet as he passed by a high slit of window. Long before this he had remedied, as he said, one grievance of one Irishwoman; but on this visit he introduced Lady Linlithgow, as like a rose as any mortal woman could be, to the kitchen, where she sat on the table, delighting the servants with her young gaiety.

We paid a delicious visit to Rose Macaulay at Beaconsfield one of those hot Summer days when the whole English landscape breathes Summer; and we had tea with the Chestertons. We were incessantly going and coming, so that our Ealing friends, anxious to do us some honour, complained that we might as well not have been there at all. The constant country-house visiting kept us fresh for London, and it was delightful to come back to the little *pied-à-terre*, to which we were so warmly welcomed, where we could rest a while before being sent freshly on our travels. All the time I was doing a little work in between, and gathering health and peace of mind as I went.

We enjoyed the London shops hugely. It was Pamela's first experience of them since she was a little girl and had chosen a visit to Liberty's before the Hippodrome.

One day when the sales were in full swing I tried on a tea-gown at Debenham and Freebody's, and—went home without my skirt. I had tea with my old friends, the Horders, in Hamilton Terrace, on the way, and no one discovered my loss. I was wearing a long coat and fortunately a black satin petticoat.

Arrived at home, Pamela observed the shortness of my skirt against the light. Everyone laughed at me, but my loyal Ellen defended me: "Well, Miss Pam, I don't see there's so much to laugh at. It was a very natural thing for the mistress to do." And then, thoughtfully, "Still an' all you wouldn't hear of many doin' it."

I never got the skirt either. I meant to have gone for it and never did. Lady Linlithgow said that *of course* it was sold in the sale. I did not grudge my friends their delight in that incident.

Clement Shorter was among our visitors, and May Sinclair and Mary Warner, and our old friends Willie and Mary Sullivan; and we lunched twice with Lord and Lady Aberdeen, who were in town.

We were growing used to London by this time. The first night we stood in Oxford Street at ten o'clock it was terrifying. We had dined with the Meynells, and Francis and Mrs. Francis had planted us where we should get our bus and then rushed for their own, little knowing what terrified hearts they left behind. Of course London was packed. If once the theatres had disgorged on to the streets and overtaken us we should never have reached Paddington or got home at all. In my own mind I saw myself and Pamela walking the long stretch between Oxford Street and Ealing, amid the terrors of the night. We were desperately afraid of the night streets. Of course I was an old Londoner—I had lived for eighteen years in and about London—but then, because of my blindness, I had been almost too tenderly guarded. I felt like a lost child, and I infected my eighteen-year-old Pamela with my fears.

As a matter of fact, we were *not* in the right place. Bus after bus sped by us, and those that stopped were not going our way. Metaphorically we wrung our hands.

At last in desperation we called to the conductress of a passing bus. She returned, clearly, the numbers of our buses, bidding us move on further.

Oh, those angels of the London traffic in 1919! never flustered nor impatient, always kind, courteous and helpful. It was a thousand pities they should have been dispossessed.

The women were the bright spot that Summer. After we had had to haul our luggage ourselves from the

trains, and stand signalling, desperately but in vain, to the taxis—porters and taximen being of the delusive opinion that the male passengers tipped better—it was a comfort to turn to the women. And the little girls in the Tube and the buses who gave an older woman their seats, while the men sat tight—how one loved and was proud of them! One day in a bus we met a true knight. He was five years old, and he jumped up to offer a lady a seat. It was his mother's lap. And, again, I remember an admirable Papa, who, coming into a bus with his tiny son, when the child slipped into a vacant seat, promptly lifted him out of it, with, "Oh no, my boy; *we* don't sit while a lady stands!"

How grateful one was for such instances in the year 1919, when women young and old were out of favour and strap-hung in the tubes and buses, flung hither and thither, while young men with rigid faces sat in long rows and read their newspapers.

CHAPTER XI

VA-ET-VIENT

PAMELA had her gaieties that Summer. One kind young lady invited her to a luncheon-party at which all the other guests were Guardsmen. It was a romantic thought, but Pamela said that they were tongue-tied till she struck the subject of fleas in dogs, whereupon they all became prodigiously lively and the meeting ended in the utmost friendliness.

She had also a smart London dance at Lady Glenconnor's, where I looked on, seeing the Jazz danced for the first time. It seemed to me a very languid, walking-about business, and I was reminded of Lord Linlithgow's story, which was current at the London clubs.

"Have you heard what Clemenceau said when he saw the Jazz for the first time?

"'Jamais j'ai vu des figures si tristes, des derrières si gais.'"

I was, or ought to have been, very well content on that occasion, talking to a young poet, Evan Morgan, and to charming Miss Ava Bodley, who was seeing to it that girls without an official partner got some dancing, though I missed seeing the beautiful pictures below which the jazzers jazzed. My concern, which rather spoilt my enjoyment, was about our getting back to 91, Lancaster Gate, Lord Linlithgow's house, where we were to stay that night, or what was left of it in the small hours of the morning. I had still the terror of London, but I resolved that if the worst came to the worst I should appeal to the butler to see that we were not adrift in London streets at three o'clock in the morning. I was

very shy of revealing my terrors to anyone but the butler. However, Lady Wemyss, kindest of the kind, sent us home in her car comfortably, so that was all right.

We were to celebrate the Peace out of Town, at Kingsgate Castle, which Lord Linlithgow had taken for the early Summer months. The morning after the dance we went forth to see the sights, having been instructed upon an early return, since we were to take the 3.25 train from Victoria. We shopped as much as we could for the crowds in the shops, and looked at the decorations. It was very slow work, for there was a dense throng in the West End streets. We had to get back to Lancaster Gate for our luggage, even if we missed lunch; but at two o'clock we found ourselves absolutely wedged in Oxford Street. Bond Street Tube was tantalisingly within sight, but there was not the remotest chance of getting to it; the buses had gone off the routes, and there we were wondering how soon suffocation would set in, for the crowd was growing and growing, and it was a tremendously hot day. Lancaster Gate was not so very far off, but it seemed as inaccessible as Heaven.

We were always despairing in those days, in this terrible new, crowded London; we had reached the moment of our worst despair and had given up hopes of that 3.25 at Victoria, when, as by a miracle, came a taxi, none knew from where, going slowly down the middle of the street, moving hardly perceptibly. I am sure thousands of people wanted that taxi, but were too paralysed by surprise to seize it. We got it; it was our first triumph over the London traffic, and we could breathe once more. Slowly, by almost imperceptible degrees, we got through the crowd and arrived at Lancaster Gate just in time to catch the 3.25, only to discover that it had been decided that we should go by motor after all, to avoid the crowded trains.

We saw Foch in another motor as we crossed the Park, and we saw all the decorations of West and South London in the pleasantest way. Every housetop was utilised as

a stand. In the July sunshine London was all a-flutter with flags and gorgeous with colour. The grey great city has a way of lending herself to decoration. Flags and brilliant fabrics come out against her house-fronts as the green flames of her trees in Spring come out incomparably beautiful against the sooty background. London was beautiful: South London, usually dreary and depressing, had blossomed to tropical splendour in a night; and presently—a long presently, for London stretches very far and reappears many times when you think to have done with her—we were really in the country, running through peaceful Kent, past the hop-gardens, by red-roofed hamlets with church-spires in their midst, sleepy rivers, houses embowered in gardens, woods against the horizon from which emerged the chimneys of some stately house, fields with grazing cattle; all the quiet beauty of English country, which I had learned to love only less well than the Irish beauty.

At Kingsgate Castle was an immense profusion of books of all kinds. One would like to do a rest-cure there,—if one had not the unfortunate passion for work, —and read all those novels. Every novel one ever wanted to read and could not, was there. What a heaven it would have been to me in my childhood, avid for books and devouring with eagerness even the driest husks.

Kingsgate, which belongs to Lady Avebury, bore traces of Sir John Lubbock, the first Baron Avebury. Science and Literature had foregathered under its roof. The bedrooms had on their doors the name of an illustrious, sometime occupant: "Darwin," "Tyndall," "Ruskin," and so on! Mine was "Hooker." Hooker was, I presume, the famous botanist of Kew. My second night in that bedroom, I had occasion to remember the joke of a man who was surprised to hear that Izaak Walton had written *The Compleat Angler*.

"Somehow," he said, "I always thought it was by the Judicious Hooker."

The Great Day was Saturday. We were sent in the morning to see the decorations at Margate and Ramsgate. In the afternoon visitors were arriving and there were decorations up everywhere. The beautiful children were dancing about like fairies in the courtyard, helping or hindering the putting up of decorations. Festivity was at its height.

It was a very sultry day. The evening was misty, smoking with heat. We were counting the bonfires, many of which were visible, and now and again we could see a rocket leap in the sky or a shower of falling fire. We had our own particular bonfire and display of fireworks on the Terrace, to the great delight of the children, who sat at the windows overhead, shrieking with joy at the display, and more especially when the womenfolk ran from the liquid fire which fizzed and spluttered in all directions.

Close on midnight, when our bonfire had died down, someone had the happy idea of going into Margate to see the popular rejoicings. So the motor came round and off we went, only to find to our disappointment an extremely dull assemblage. We had rather looked for London-by-the-Sea, but it was not there. It was only Margate. London, which is a country by itself, is the only bit of England that knows how to enjoy itself, even if its enjoyment takes the form of "Mafficking." We decided that the English take their pleasures sadly, and went home.

I forget if it was on that night that the servants had their ball, when one lay awake to the sound of the music and the dancing feet, and fell asleep to the same festivity. I was awakened to a display of heavenly fireworks that eclipsed all England had shown that day. It was a terrific thunderstorm, accompanied by torrential rain. In the midst came Pamela for company; and then something very strange happened.

All round the cornices water began to pour in, splashing on to the bed, and rising steadily on the floor. I simply

lifted the bed-clothes to keep the water from my face, assuring Pamela that that was the proper thing to be done, and in fact the only possible thing, when she implored me to flee from the flood.

Presently the place was full of shrouded figures, their heads wrapped in dusters, all with pails and cloths and mops trying to stem the flood. When I was persuaded to leave the safe shelter of my bed, half of which was very wet, there must have been at least a foot of water in the room. As I waded it in my bare feet I recalled the Judicious Hooker.

It was only that a tank sunk in the roof had overflowed from the tremendous rain, and the downpour ceased as soon as the rain had left off and the tank resumed its proper level.

I went back after the water had ceased to come in and slept the rest of the night very sweetly in the dry half of the bed.

Lord Linlithgow described it next morning in this way:

"The grey dawn broke upon Mrs. Hinkson swimming strongly for life, with her despatch-case in her mouth."

I was none the worse for the adventure. The Sunday was very wet, but we were well entertained by the quips and pranks of our host, which were seldom ceasing, and the society beyond our hosts, of a very charming and brilliant Mrs. Marshall Roberts, who had a really literary mind; and there were always the friendly children, so glad to see visitors in the nursery. I find from my diary that I wrote two articles on the Saturday and one on the Sunday—in the wet room—so that I gathered honey in more senses than one.

We went back to London on the Monday, lunching with May Sinclair at the Albemarle Club, and we had tea with Maude Egerton, and King and Greville MacDonald. On Wednesday, the 23rd July, we went to Greatham to the Meynells', our first visit to that delightful abode.

Greatham deserves a description, not only for its own delights, but because it represents a very interesting and successful experiment.

Shortly before the War, Wilfrid Meynell had had the good fortune to acquire about a hundred acres of Sussex land, mainly gorse and woodland, situated about four miles from Pulborough and under the Downs, in beautiful country. There was a little farmhouse on the property, old and beautiful, with various out-buildings and a cottage at some distance. Wilfrid was always a builder. You may still see of his building, with Leonard Stokes for architect, a most individual house at 47, Palace Court, W., a house of fragrant memories for me, for I watched its building in 1889 and moved in almost with the owners.

In 1889 Wilfrid Meynell was so urban and urbane a person that one would have thought the sweet shady side of Pall Mall and the Parks would have satisfied him. But perhaps he was really a countryman at heart and Town was only his toy. Greatham must have been a huge joy in the making. He set out on a patriarchal plan. He added to the original farmhouse, keeping all its delights, one beautiful long room with a parquet floor, an immense fire-place with recesses at either side for wood, white walls and a beamed ceiling, wide cottage windows with deep recesses, and a window-door, which took in the beautiful lawn and trees beyond; likewise a bathroom; and there was a most delightful abode for the father and mother of the family and their guests. The eaves of the house are low, and roses and other climbing things sprawl upon the white walls. Within, you ascend by a bare wooden staircase and you enter the bedrooms in the manner of Red Riding-hood,—"Pull the bobbin and the latch will go up." Greatham is full of treasures,—first editions, signed portraits and books, many mementoes of famous people, left about anywhere, the kind of things other people would put away under glass. I suppose Greatham overflows with such treasures, as some of the great houses where historic

prints and mezzotints of ancestors preside over your bath.

No one could wish for a sweeter habitation. Add to the beauties blue Sussex skies with white clouds floating upon them; blue peeps of the Downs from every window,—I am not so intolerant as the Norman-Irish lady who said to me: "Isn't it tiresome when the English say to you: 'But have you seen the Downs this morning?' The Downs! To me, whose windows frame the Keeper Mountains!"—a little wood full of primroses and bluebells in Spring; the Sussex nightingales; all the rich farming life going on round about.

The various outbuildings were converted, each one, into a habitation for a daughter. Viola wrote her novels in Shed Hall, which was once a cow-shed; Monica has her country cottage of something that might have been a wash-house; Madeline and her children have the cottage in the wood. There the children, grown up, some of them with children of their own, are under the eyes of the parents as they were in happy childhood.

The Meynells were then nearly my oldest friends living, as they are now, since Lady Gilbert died this year (1921), the very oldest. I came to them in 1884 with an introduction from Father Matthew Russell. There have been no coldnesses in our long and happy friendship.

Greatham is a most restful place. It was very happy there with the old friends, for a few too-brief days, for we had to return to Ealing on the Saturday, since we were going to Scotland in a day or two. We were out all day in the lovely Sussex country. Wilfrid was as freakish as ever. One morning he rushed us in, at a most unreasonable hour for calling, on a lady who did not at all expect visitors.

"This is Mrs. Hinkson," he said, "and now tell her, please, how many of her hundred novels you have read."

The poor lady was incapable of prevarication. She had read none and said so.

It was so exactly like him in the old days at Palace Court, when he was always springing his jests upon me; but I had better not talk about them, perhaps, since he constantly reproaches me with having alienated him from the Irish race all over the world by one story of those days, and from patriotic Americans by another,—which is to say too much for my circulation.

I was always interested to see the traces the War had left, the changes which had followed the War. In Ireland there were only wounded men and people in mourning. The Irish girls never arrived at the trousered and breeched ease of the women war-workers, who were still so much in evidence in England. Madeline Lucas, young and sad, remains in my mind as I saw her standing by the road-side in a blue smock and breeches watching for the first sight of her children as they came from school. She seemed part of the Sussex landscape—like a girl who might have stepped out of a Hardy novel. The children had a delightful schoolmistress, who lived in the loneliest of cottages, surrounded by the woods, with another young teacher. The little room where we had tea with her was full of books, a great many of the latest volumes among them. I remembered that room when, later, a teacher in a secondary school in East Anglia asked my permission to use some verses in an anthology she was preparing for the use of Secondary Schools. I learned then that these children in East Anglia—the Bœotia of England—were being fed upon the noblest of English poetry, including, amongst the moderns, Francis Thompson, Yeats, our own A. E. Masefield, Chesterton, Rupert Brooke, the Housmans; in fact, all who counted and were willing to be represented.

Her syllabus made me envious for the Irish children. Have they any such poetry-book? And are they brought to poetry with such loving zeal as this school-teacher of East Anglia brought to her work? The things she told me—of the joy of the children in the great and beautiful poetry, of how they carried it to their own hearth-sides

and made their parents listen to it—seemed to me such joyful tidings that I went happy for days. The lady was a graduate of T.C.D. I hope there are more like her and that they will be available some day for the Irish schools. The book, which was published by Messrs. Sidgwick & Jackson, is called the *Daffodil Poetry Book*. It might edify some of my lively country-people, with a poor opinion of English idealism or spirituality, to read it. For poetry is the ideal, and to love great and noble poetry is to uplift the heart and spirit.

This is a long discursiveness. I must add to what I have written about Greatham the creditable fact that the local authority seeking for a plot or two on the little property upon which to erect labourers' dwellings, on its being pointed out to them that this was a family settlement, which would hardly bear close neighbours, withdrew, expressing its sympathy and interest with the idea and its hopes that other people might follow Wilfrid Meynell's example.

Greatham has had many poems written to it by the various poets it has received into its hospitality. It adds another literary association to the county of Belloc, Kipling and many another famous name; not to mention Francis Thompson, who sojourned at Storrington with the Franciscans. There was so much of Francis Thompson between Greatham and Storrington that one could not pick a daisy or a poppy but it was white and red with the memory of him.

We returned to Amherst Road, to the happy surprise of Pat opening the door to us, for we had not expected him that week-end,—and the next day we all lunched with May Sinclair, and then home, to Lady Jane Kenney-Herbert and her daughter and Muriel Stuart to tea. My purblind eyes took Muriel Stuart to be someone Lady Jane had brought in her train, and I asked her politely if she liked Ealing and if this was her first visit, she being my next-door neighbour. I was always doing such absurd things through my blindness and my inability to remember

a face not very well known to me. It is easier now that I have learned to depend on voices. She was very sweet about it, this young poet, as she always has been to me, even when I refused to see eye to eye with her about her poetry.

Theodore Maynard came in that evening, so we were not short of poets, and Willie Sullivan, a distinguished specialist in criminology and mental disease, who is now Medical Superintendent of Broadmoor. He listened two hours on end in the garden to Pat talking about the War, but it reached me in a steady flow from Pat, since I was otherwise engaged. He said afterwards that he had not before known how the War looked, though his own son had been out.

The next day we lunched with Lady Wemyss, and hurried home to get our luggage off to Euston, as there was going to be a tremendous rush to Scotland by the morning express. It was the very first year since 1913 that the people, gentle and simple, had gone holidaying.

CHAPTER XII

GOING NORTH

AMONG the benefactions which have come to me from Lord Aberdeen let me name, with a thankful heart, Mr. Jones,—now no longer, alas! Mr. Jones of Euston.

We need not have made that violent rush with the luggage after all, for there was a telegram from Lord Aberdeen when we came home, telling us—he had remembered the timid travellers out of his kind heart—that he had commended us to Mr. Jones, and that we were to arrive early at Euston and proceed at once to the Station-Master's Office.

Mr. Jones had been for years station-master at Holyhead, and he had so known and been known to every important person who had journeyed to and from Ireland. His Reminiscences would be worth reading, since everyone who was anyone, appreciating Mr. Jones at his true value, had been friendly with him. Even the taciturn Mr. Parnell had talked with Mr. Jones.

We arrived very early, travelling up to Paddington with the working-men and girls on their way to shops and City offices. It was a seven-o'clock train or thereabouts, and, of course, it was really only six o'clock sun-time. We had snatched a morning cup of tea, expecting to get breakfast in the train. It was exquisite weather, and we were filled with the true holiday spirit, despite the early start.

Mr. Jones was not yet at the Station-Master's Office, but he had remembered. Straightway all our cares slid from us. We were people of importance, to be treated with deference. Although we were third-class passengers, we travelled like the great.

A dignified-looking official escorted us to our carriage, which had been kept locked. We selected our seats. The aforesaid official took in hand the collection of our luggage, the buying of our tickets, the selection of our newspapers. We travelled like the Grand Lama, if he ever travels.

Just at the last moment, before the train started, came Mr. Jones, to ask if we had all we wanted. People who travelled habitually between Dublin and London up to the end of 1920 must have known Mr. Jones, at least by sight. Anything more urbane and dignified than Mr. Jones cannot well be imagined. His beautiful rosy face, exuding benevolence, his beaming smile, his shining top-hat, his frock-coat, the lapel of which always showed a flower,—what all this most pleasant personality meant to myriads of bewildered people during all those years in which Mr. Jones reigned at Euston, must be written down in the book of the Recording Angel. I shall have occasion later on to speak of Mr. Jones as I saw him in circumstances of extraordinary difficulty. This was our first meeting. Our fellow-passengers were mightily impressed by the courtliness of Mr. Jones. He would have had it for anybody in difficulties. At this stage let me say that Euston is a great station. Other station-masters may have had to live up to it. Euston had to live up to Mr. Jones.

Our fellow-passengers—well, they were charming people. There was a nurse who was seen off by a young probationer: it was plain to see that that nurse was a beloved person. From the moment she tipped the porter, saying, with a good Scottish speech, "That's very kind of you, my laddie," one felt that she was a nurse to be trusted.

All that Summer we foregathered with our fellow-passengers on our many journeys. The lack of self-consciousness of the War years was still on everybody. They were ready to talk and be friendly. I have watched my fellow-passengers since going back steadily to the

inhuman isolation of the pre-war days. The War had unlocked hearts: the key had not yet turned back in the lock in the Summer of 1919.

There was a skilled workman,—a foreman in some engineering works, as fine a gentleman as one would want to travel with, and full of intelligence. His little brown-faced wife called him "Charlie." They were going home to Scotland, their first holiday since 1914. "Charlie" was the only man in the carriage, and no one could have wished him away.

There was an interesting young lady, the daughter of a well-known South African publicist, as we found out in the course of the long day. She read *Joan and Peter*, sitting on her suit-case after we had taken more than our quota of passengers, now and again going into the corridor to smoke a cigarette.

There was another nurse,—but "Sister," as the young probationer called her, has quite eclipsed the other in my memory. "Sister," who was apparently the Matron of a hospital, had obviously overworked. One did not need the tender charges of the probationer that she was to do nothing for six whole weeks to be aware of that. There was a look of aching weariness in her face, which never for one moment concealed the secret joy within. She radiated benignity. Her face had the expression, very human and common-sensible, withal spiritual and rapt, that may be seen in the faces of some saints. Now I come to think of it, the youngest Daughter of the Saintly Choir, Sœur Thérèse of Lisieux, wears just such an expression in her pictures.

We should have fared badly if it had not been for "Sister." There was no breakfast on the train. As we were bound for Aberdeen, the furthest point to which the train travelled, our lunch was postponed till three o'clock. When we were told these dreadful tidings we had our misgivings about there being any lunch left. It was an enormously long train, and it was crowded from end to end,—the corridors full, and the guard's

van, and what could be spared for standing-room in the luggage-van. It would not have been such a gala day if it had not been for "Sister," who gave us the major portion of her lunch.

All the schoolboys were going home, which added to the gaiety. The corridor was full of curly heads, and heads covered as thickly as a bird's, which one had to pat as one passed by. The recipients of the pats invariably looked up with a beaming smile. Everyone was in a happy humour.

It was tremendously hot, a splendid sun pouring down his rays from Land's End to John o' Groat's, but it was not oppressive; and everyone was so friendly. We took in a poor Scottish lassie, with an enormous and amiable baby, after we had crossed the Border, and we were all interested in the baby: it said much for our cheerfulness. "Charlie" got out at a station and brought tea for the "puir lassie," and incidentally for the rest of us.

"Sister" had left us before that. Some time in the afternoon I had a long and informing talk with "Charlie," at least he talked and I listened. There can be no better talker than a highly skilled and very intelligent mechanic, especially if he has the beautiful manners of "Charlie."

I forget where the South African young lady left us; but Charlie and "the Missus" went while we were at dinner. They passed our window and they waved to us as long as we could see them. I remember that day as a glow of friendliness and sunshine and warming talk from beginning to close.

Our very last talk was with a lady who had been waiting at her station—was it Blair Athol?—the very names of the stations had a romantic and adventurous sound, for Scotland was new ground to us—for a couple of hours. We were very late. She left us at, I think, Montrose,—I hope I'm not mixing them all up! It was nearly one o'clock when we got into Aberdeen,

where Lord Aberdeen had taken a room for us at the very comfortable Grand Hotel.

We should have reached our hotel from the station, but we missed the covered way and found ourselves in the street. Some other travellers indicated the dark pile of the Grand Hotel with a pointing finger and left us. The sound of their footsteps died away and the Granite City was dead asleep. However, after a few moments of terror, we discovered around a corner the lit portal of the Grand Hotel and the weary travellers were in haven.

There were still a good many soldiers about. In fact, the unmoving figure of an Australian had enhanced my terror while we groped in the small hours for the Grand Hotel. We went on next morning to Udny, where Lord Aberdeen's car waited for us. On the way there we had been amused, if slightly disedified, by the antics of a couple of Scottish lassies who travelled with us. The ecstatic exclamation of one at Aberdeen station: "Sodgers!" had first attracted our attention. "Sodgers" were very much in evidence then, and I am bound to say that the young ladies' challenges were not received with any enthusiasm. Indeed, I have a recollection of soldiers who stared beyond the over-forward young ladies, and above them and around them, everywhere except at their impudent faces. This by-play continued all the way down the line to Udny, and one was obliged to be amused by such overflowing animal spirits, while somewhat scandalised.

Lady Aberdeen carried me off within an hour of our arrival to lunch with Lady Caithness, the President of a local Women's Society, where I was asked to speak. There I met one of the charming maiden aunts, who are sometimes more attractive than young maids or the matrons. I told her of the pantomime we had watched in the train. The girls had been so full of high spirits, so rollicking, and so little self-conscious,—rebuffs had amused them at least as much as if their advances had been

accepted—that one could not but laugh. She would not smile nor take a light-hearted view of it.

"I'm afraid they're rather bold," she said. "Now, you don't see those things in Ireland, do you? Do you know, I really think it's the religion. It's full of errors, of course, as we know, but it has certainly that effect."

She looked at me in a considering way.

"Do you suppose it's the Blessed Virgin?" she asked.

I said I thought it was probably that: there might also be something of race. It had never occurred to this dear lady that I could belong to the Church of the errors. She mentioned casually afterwards that she had contributed to the funds of the Irish Church Missions.

I was to speak to the women, many of whom had lost their sons in the War. A volume of my own verse was put into my hand, and I was bidden to read as well as speak. There was a committee of ladies, the minister's wife, the doctor's wife, and so on, who sat on the platform with us, while the women sat in the body of the hall.

I have spoken a good many times to my own country-people and to English gatherings of late years: this was my first small public appearance in Scotland. I found there the most responsive audience I had ever met, that small audience of women in a village-hall in Aberdeenshire. The coldest audience I ever faced was a Cork audience. I hasten to add that there was no reason for the coldness, so far as I know. That audience just woke up for a moment when I read "The County of Mayo," and relapsed into coldness. It broke up and melted away at the end of my address, hardly anyone coming to speak to me. It was not what I had expected in Cork, and not what I am accustomed to in Dublin and London. My friends explained it by saying that the Cork people wait till they know you. I had gone from England to give that lecture. I came on another occasion, but I had a chill in my heart by that time. I did not expect a Cork audience to be anything but cold.

And here, in the small Scottish town, I was wrapped about with love and approval. One Ulster woman laid hands on me as her countrywoman and would not be dispossessed. My word! that Ulster Presbyterian was not aware of any partition between her and me. I might have said like Garrick that the house rose at me, the little house. When it was time to go I could hardly break away from them.

At Haddo I had Queen Victoria's Room, where she had slept when she visited Lord Aberdeen's grandfather, the great Earl of Aberdeen. Everything in the room had some association with Her Majesty. I am bound to say that she did not trouble my sleep.

There was quite a party gathered there because it was to be a week of functions. Everywhere we stayed that Summer we happened upon Peace Celebrations. There were two festive days that week, the first a garden-party for the tenantry, many of whom had bought their holdings. There were a great number of tenants and ex-tenants there, from the famous breeders of shorthorn cattle, men whose names are known all over the world, to the humble crofter. Various Aberdeen worthies, the Lord Provost, the Principal of the University, Sir George Adam Smith, with his delightful family, of whom we were to see something more,—various private friends of Lord and Lady Aberdeen.

I was very much struck by the difference between the relations of landlord and tenant which existed in Scotland as compared with those in Ireland. I discovered to my amazement that the severance between landlord and tenant here was a matter of deep grief, almost of bitterness. Some of the old men, like Mr. Duthie, perhaps the most famous of the breeders of the Aberdeen Polled Angus—any calf of his breeding is worth at least three hundred pounds—spoke of the severance with tears. One of the speakers—Lord Haddo, I think—had referred to "the new lairds." But, said one of the speakers, they did not want to be lairds, they wanted

to be as their fathers had been before them, tenants on the estate.

Next day there was a children's party, when all the children from the parishes around were entertained.

Among our fellow-guests there was a singularly beautiful and saintly old man, Mr. Brebner, the minister of the parish of Methlick, who was chaplain at Haddo and a close personal friend of its owners. He was thoroughly well-read, as so many Scottish ministers are, and very keenly interested in literature. Somehow one *smells* the education in the atmosphere in Scotland, where any lad, however humble, may aspire to a University education.

There certainly is a marked affinity between the Irish and the Scots. Never had I found myself more happily at home than with these Scots of the North. Kindly, humorous, imaginative, shrewd, they are like the Irish, who can be worldly in a sense of belonging to their world and still very sure of the Kingdom. From our first introduction to this dear, beautiful, old man, when he said, broadly beaming, "And so you are a member of the Old Faith," we met on a common spiritual basis.

He had been a friend of Dr. Chisholm, the Catholic Bishop of Aberdeen, of whom we heard many stories in Scotland, where his name is held in much honour and affection by all manner of people. Dr. Brebner was proud that a famous saying of the Bishop was addressed to him. Dr. Brebner had said in regard to their association in some good work or other: "You'll give your blessing to a heretic, my Lord." The Bishop laid an affectionate hand on his shoulder: "My dear fellow," he said, "during the course of a long life I have met with many strange heresies, but never a heretic."

Dr. Brebner had many amusing stories about the author of this fine saying. One was of an occasion when Dr. Chisholm and the Episcopalian (is that the right word for Scotland?) Bishop travelled by the same train to Aberdeen, the latter on his way to some function or other. At Aberdeen station a young footman put in

his head. "Would you be the Bishop we're expecting, sir?" "No, my laddie, I'm the other chap."

On our way through Aberdeen, after a very happy visit to a house where all the virtues thrive, we lunched at the Principal's house with Sir George and Lady Adam Smith. That was such a hospitable and hearty house as to remind one of Ireland. I talked Irish politics with the Principal, who was sympathetic. The trouble had hardly then taken shape in Ireland. In July of that year the first policeman had been shot—*i.e.* District Inspector Hunt, as the result, it was said in Ireland, of a domiciliary visit when the daughters of the house were turned out-of-doors in their night-attire. At the moment it seemed no more than an isolated incident, not a precursor. I don't think we discussed it. The Principal was a Gladstonian Home Ruler, very friendly to Ireland, as I found all the Scots I met with.

They had lost two sons in the War. There was no shadow of that upon the happy house, but perhaps an added brightness. Another, home on leave, or demobilised, had run out to the motor to help with our luggage. They were charming people, Lady Adam Smith looking a sister to her own daughters, alluring people, from whom happiness broke despite the sorrow. The eldest daughter had gone earlier in the year with her father to America on some academic business or pleasure, and had met her mate in a young American. They, newly-married and very much in love, were paying a visit to the parents before sailing for America. I have never seen a more shining happiness. We had noticed the family group at Haddo the day of the garden-party, and been much attracted by them, without knowing who they were. It was extremely pleasant to be taken into their warm hospitality and friendship.

I remember an amusing incident at lunch. An extraordinary article was handed to me across the table and I was asked what it was. Pamela had already failed

to identify it. I suggested a very ancient tobacco-pipe of giant size which had been found in a bog. They shook their heads, evidently disappointed. Then I suggested a primeval golf-club, a fossilised bone of some unknown animal. No. At last I gave it up.

"Well," said the young American bridegroom dejectedly, "I guess there's something wrong somewhere. I should have expected you to recognise your own shillela (*i. e.* shillelagh) when you saw it, but apparently you don't."

The incredible implement had been presented to him by a Scottish officer, who had bought it in Ireland as a shillelagh. It must have dated from the time of the Picts.

We left a share of our hearts with these delightful people, which they keep, even if we never meet again, but that I do not anticipate.

CHAPTER XIII

IN THE HIGHLANDS

Our next stopping-place was Inverness. We were going to stay at the house of Captain Arthur Spence, an officer in the Gunners, whom we had very much liked at Claremorris. He was most sympathetic to the Irish, as indeed all the soldiers, with the exception of one or two old regular officers, had been that last Summer of the War. He had been through the terrible first battle of Gaza and had the Military Cross. I always remember his real distress when he rode to Leenane from Claremorris to make out a range for practice with the guns, and the people came and looked at him and said sorrowfully and without anger: "Why are ye here?" It was the time when Conscription was hanging over the country. He was entirely opposed to Conscription for Ireland, as were most of the others, and he and they were very sensitive about the people's unfriendliness.

That journey from Aberdeen to Inverness was marked, as though by milestones, by distillery after distillery. All the names one had ever seen on whisky-bottles or in a wine-merchant's whisky list stared out at one as the train climbed through the wooded country, and the smell of whisky mingled with the smell of pines and heather.

At Inverness our host awaited us, as pleased as a schoolboy to see us, and more willing to show it. His house was five miles from Inverness, and as we motored we were going straight into the purple mountains, darkly purple like a very dark pansy. The house was most

delightful. It was a shooting-lodge belonging to Baroness Burton of Dochfour, set in the midst of a moor, one side of the house overlooking the Caledonian Canal just where it widens into Loch Ness. The mountains looked in at the windows. One felt that one could have touched them. They were quite unlike the Irish mountains, which you must follow to discover their mystery. Perhaps one never does wholly capture the mystery of the Irish mountains. Perhaps the enchantress still eludes you, and with your foot on the mountain heather you realise that she is yet on before.

All day long you may motor your fastest towards the Irish mountains before you come up with them, if indeed they do not suddenly fling a shawl of mist about them in which you lose them altogether. In Scotland it was quite easy to come up with the mountains, to lay your hand on them and hold them. They were so friendly that it seemed as though they ran to meet you. To be sure, looking down the Loch, a mountain might reveal itself as a peak of pink crystal like a tower of the City of God, and when you came near it would be just heather-clad. The mountains stood out very plainly. To be sure, it was a dry Summer, and all the burns were dry; we never saw a mist while we were in Scotland that year.

Ballindarroch had been built and fitted up for its purpose, and it was all delightfully clean and fresh, with flowery chintz wall-papers, and white paint, and windows everywhere, and long ranges of bedrooms and shining bathrooms; outside the house blocks of bachelor bedrooms against an overflow of guests. You could not have imagined a ghost in Ballindarroch, nor any dark happening.

We came to the conclusion that Summer that the Scottish cuisine must be the best in the world. We had come from London, which was still rationed, where the meat allowed you was the colour and consistency of the cats'-meat which used to be cried about London streets

in pre-war days—horrid little dark-coloured cubes, stuck on a stick, which seemed such delicious dainties to the cats that they came to the call of the vendor as though he had been the Pied Piper. Imagine the change to a land literally flowing with milk and honey. Instead of margarine, sweet, fresh butter and cream: instead of black, ill-baked bread, home-made bread of the most delicious, with the whole gamut of cakes, home-made jams, fresh fruit, new-picked at every meal. A reviewer of a former volume of Reminiscences has accused me of being greedy. Well, I had had four years of margarine and bread made of black flour. Even when other people had the white flour the family of the Resident Magistrate must have the black. I certainly enjoyed the Scottish food, and I praise the Scottish housewife. During the War the Irish were supposed by some people to have fed on the fat of the land. Well, there was sugar to be had in Ireland and white flour, but the majority of people had no money to buy these luxuries.

Our host had just got a new car. I believe it had been delivered the day before we came. He was very anxious for us to see as much as he could show us of Scotland within a limited period. He had written to me: "Your Ireland is very beautiful, but not so beautiful as my Scotland." He was out to persuade us. Fortunately we could admire unreservedly, since there was no comparison with Ireland. Caledonia, stern and wild, was for that Summer all golden. It was a great and glorious Summer; the fine weather persisted right through August, and the drought was a remarkable thing for Scotland. As we motored through the Highland glens we saw the beautiful roe-deer standing to drink by rivers and pools, driven from the hills by the need of water.

Captain Spence had not driven since before the War. He was very eager to begin, and I think he had had only one run with the new car before he took us on.

We motored every day, sometimes whole days. We

used to run along the side of Loch Ness, with nothing between the road and the Loch save the steep descent. The road was very narrow. At one point two cars could not pass each other for nine miles of road. If they met one would have had to back.

We used to look out very anxiously for another car along that stretch of road. We never met one. That first August after the War the Highlands were supposed to be given over to the plutocrats, their guests and gillies and servants of all sorts.

Inverness was indeed a place of Rolls-Royces, with haughty chauffeurs driving, in a manner of speaking, with their hands in their pockets, quite careless of the safety or convenience of humble folk. But what became of them and their cars and the plutocratic owners, and their men and maidservants, after Inverness? The glens and the mountains swallowed them up, assimilated them without the smallest difficulty or disturbance. The Highlands of Scotland were as solitary that rich August as though it had been midwinter. We hardly ever met another car, and never one at all in that nine-miles stretch of road overhanging the Loch.

I'm afraid Captain Spence drove rather furiously. Once he delayed in changing the gear on a precipitous hill and we began to run downhill; but we had no mishap. We learnt to love the lovely glens—Glen Afferick—Glen Cannick; the Passes, almost terrible in their frowning majesty. We could admire and give our hearts to all this beauty with no disloyalty. It was not Irish beauty at all. It had not the Irish softness.

One afternoon we went to see Culloden. It was late afternoon and melancholy, with a low, sagging sky, and much cloud, a pale band of light over the Western Islands, just the time and the weather to create the proper mood for Culloden.

There stretched the Moor, with its few ragged trees, its bents and coarse grasses, profoundly desolate, under the sad sky. On the monument hung a few wreaths

not yet withered. We stooped and read the inscription: "To the Memory of the gallant Highland gentlemen who fell for Scotland and Prince Charlie." The whole pity and passion of the Lost Cause was present with us. And there on the Moor were the little headstones of the Clans—Clan Stewart of Appin, Clan Mackintosh, Clan Macgillivray, and so on. Captain Spence told us that within living memory the graves had been opened so that the clansmen who lay there might be identified by their tartans. He said that bits of that long-buried tartan were still in possession of some people in Inverness.

The battle was lost, they said, upon a punctilio of Highland pride and Highland gallantry. Every Clan wanted to be in the forefront of the battle, and while they wrangled Cumberland's army was upon them.

There was the Butcher's Stone from which Cumberland directed the operations of his army. Someone had been picnicking, and there were the disfiguring traces of the picnic, broken bottles, torn papers, orange-peel. But none had profaned the stark serenity of the lonesome Moor, which has lain untouched by spade or ploughshare since Prince Charlie's star went down there into the graves of the Clans.

But stay——! At one part of the Moor was a fenced-in turnip-field, horribly utilitarian in that consecrated place. We approached to wonder at it. Then we understood its meaning. That, too, had its headstone and its inscription:

"The field of the English. They were buried here."

Only Celtic malice could have inspired the inscription and the turnip-field. I told many of my English friends about it. They invariably laughed. It is their quality, that slowness to anger, that aloof indifference. It is something Celts and Latins have flung themselves against in vain, calling it stupidity and other hard names.

But, after all, we quicken to the Lost Causes in an exaltation the placid and prosperous might well envy us. We have the necessity to fight for our Cause, and it

must be a losing or a Lost Cause to inspire our utmost devotion. Sorrow wears for us a more alluring face than joy, and our Queen must be in chains to win the heart out of our breast. One wonders now if Ireland, when she comes to be happy, will be so passionately loved; or shall we be as unconscious of her as the mass of the English are of England?

On the Sunday we motored all day. After Mass at Inverness we got off into the mountains, stopping for lunch at the Drumnadrochit Hotel, where we met some scions of the great Highland families. By the way, you have to see a Highlander swing his kilt to know how it should be done. I first saw it in the case of young Arthur Spence, and realised how much they wrong the kilt who do not know how to give it that gallant swing. There Pamela nearly brought down the hotel upon our heads by strumming on the piano—on the Sabbath. Everyone rushed to drag her from the music-stool, and, having rescued her and closed the piano, a roomful of kindly people waited in an agonised suspense for some Judgment to appear that should drive us forth from the hotel unfed. But nothing happened. Perhaps for once the Judgment had shut its ears.

It was nothing to the trouble she—they—for our host was implicated—got into at another hotel for smoking a cigarette. They had been encouraged by the example of some visitors at the hotel, who left the room before the female dragon appeared at the door and talked at the top of her voice to the astonished room. She was out of her place in a Highland hotel, this Puritanical shrew. Just a stone's-throw from the hotel was a little Catholic church which served the Catholic population of the Glen. She was an alien presence—certainly not a Highlander—not Scottish at all, perhaps. She might have wandered from Belfast into the lovely Glen.

We paid a visit to Guisachan, Lady Aberdeen's old home, which she had wished us to see. It was in the occupation of Lady Portsmouth (I think) at the time,

but the housekeeper had been in the service of the Tweedmouths and was full of stories of the family. On the table, laid to the hand of a reader, and in the bookshelves, we found many modern books, and we were interested to see how many Irish books there were, just laid down as though the reader had gone away for a little while and would come back. James Stephens and A. E. were among the writers Lady Portsmouth read apparently. There are two things which welcome one to a strange house—familiar books on the table and a dog on the hearth.

It was pleasant to find how much of a talisman Lady Aberdeen's name was. The lodge-keeper, who had received us unpropitiously as mere sight-seers, became very friendly on seeing our credentials; and the housekeeper overflowed with memories of old days. Guisachan is, I think, still thirty miles from a station, and when Lord Aberdeen went courting to Guisachan he had enormously long rides. We heard a great deal, too, of Lady Fanny Marjoribanks—Lady Tweedmouth later—who seemed much in the housekeeper's affections, as we went from room to room of the house from which its old owners had departed.

We did our hundred miles that day, going right to the head of Glen Afferick before turning. It was a day packed full with beauty, but I remember it also towards the close as a very hungry day—for we had passed the hotel after our painful experience of the day before, and every other hotel and tea-rooms we found shut because it was the Sabbath. So it was a good thing, after all, that there should be one hostess from Belfast in the Highland Glen.

One of my memories of Ballindarroch is of crossing the Caledonian Canal by the Ferry. Our motor just slid on to the two linked boats and we were ferried across. It must have been a very beautiful evening, for I keep that ferrying as an enchanting incident—the sun setting down the Loch, the overhanging trees, the dark water,

broken to gold by our passage. It was indeed a wonder-world. The Loch and the mountains took the most wonderful colours, and far down the Loch one imagined the Western Islands in a golden glory.

Our dear host was very anxious to take us to Fort William and Fort Augustus. At the latter place I hoped, with confidence, for a welcome from the Benedictines. Our host's explicit reason for planning this excursion was that we should travel over the worst motoring road in Scotland, that is to say, the most dangerous. He was certainly an adventurous driver, but as we had no mishaps I must only conclude that he was a safe one. He used to entertain us as we drove along the Lochside by pointing out where casualties had occurred, but as they had happened to horsed vehicles they had no personal terror for us. After all, in such places the lifeless, nerveless motor has its advantages.

It was a delicious visit; everything was so kind and sweet and comfortable; and we gave our hearts to the Highlands and the Highland men and women.

> "In the Highlands in the lonesome places,
> Where the old plain men have rosy faces,
> And the fair young maidens quiet eyes. . . ."

We realised fully what this lovely country meant to Stevenson and his peers, and how Caledonia, golden, mild, might be a sweet nurse for a poetic child.

Another day we saw Cawdor. These names were names of might, compelling names to us as we looked up at the old pile, with its long ranges of windows where the ghost of Lady Macbeth must go wringing the little hands that no washing would ever make clean. I don't think I should like to sleep at Cawdor.

The day we left our host came with us to our early train. He was very reproachful that we would not stay and visit the Western Islands with him. We agreed to make the excursion in the following Summer, but that

was not to be, and since then our kind host and hostess have followed their son to Rhodesia, for some years at all events. May Ballindarroch lie always in the sunshine!

Lady Aberdeen had prepared us for the beauty of the journey by the Highland Railway from Inverness to Perth. She had not told us of its irregular behaviour. I could not count the number of times that train started and came back, always to our Highland host standing with patient courtesy on the platform; but at last we were off.

The train climbed and climbed to the heights of the Grampians. The mountains were royal-purple with the heather. I give the palm to the Scottish heather for thick abundance and depth of colour. It was solid purple, not just purple with green between, and the train ran for hours through this wonder of purple on either side, by gorges where far below was a dry river-bed; through a country where there were the red deer and the mountain sheep, and possibly an eagle overhead, but little or no sign of human life. There were tall stakes all the way, so that when Winter filled the valleys with snow the track might not be lost.

The Highland Railway must have been an engineering feat of no small magnitude. There were so many forces of Nature to contend against. I am not surprised that after so supreme an effort to live the Highland Railway should afterwards take life easily. We were late everywhere. We had been promised an hour at Perth for lunch, but I wouldn't like to say how late we were at Perth: the hour was gone, and more than the hour. We had come down from the mountains to beautiful golden cornfields, sweeping away to majestic woods in all their Summer darkness. The only things we missed were the singing streams which, in a normal Summer, would have made the air sweet with their music and freshness all the way. Every river-bed was stone dry.

There were more magic names—Birnam Wood and

Dunsinane—Macbeth again—and one remembered that this would be the steep and arduous way to Cawdor.

Our fellow-passengers again were delightful. Has all that good comradeship passed away from earth? I hope not. There was a Highland lady and her maid, and a Yorkshire business man and his wife, who had been to the Western Islands. Again we met the fine gentleman. At Perth there were about ten minutes given to the famished travellers to snatch what they could from the station buffet and scurry back to their carriages. The good Yorkshireman took me in charge. The younger ones were sent to forage for themselves. He foraged for me, and, having secured a very good meal, he settled me in a corner of the carriage with my feet on his suit-case, and left me to enjoy the food while he snatched something for himself. Now I come to think of it he would not hear of accepting payment. It was what an Irishman might have done, and only an Irishwoman perhaps would not have felt embarrassed.

He gave me his address and I sent him a book, and he wrote and said that they had now a "dinky little cottage" on the Yorkshire moors, and would we come and see them on the first opportunity?

We left those good fellow-travellers at Dunfermline East. God go with you, all good travellers! There the Highland Railway acted after its manner. "You never know, with the Highland Railway," everyone said.

We were going to Hopetoun, to the Linlithgows, and we were very travel-stained. At Dunfermline East the train went off with our luggage to Edinburgh. The gentleman who spoke the broadest Scotch, in the station-master's office thought we might recover it in a week. The sympathetic chauffeur, who was an old friend after Kingsgate, thought perhaps three days.

We arrived at Hopetoun, and, very conscious of our griminess, suggested that we might retire to bed. In a house where everyone did exactly as he or she pleased, there was no demur. I am glad to recall that I kept my

head, and cursed neither my fate nor the Highland Railway, for, lo and behold! long before the dressing-gong sounded the luggage was at our door. The motor had gone to Edinburgh to fetch another visitor and had picked up the missing luggage.

The next morning Lady Linlithgow took me to see Sir George Berry about my eyes. Lord Linlithgow had discovered that I shirked an oculist's verdict. I was really afraid that he might tell me I should not use my eyes, a prescription I should have found it impossible to act upon. But now I had no option. These kind friends had settled it all for me—and the verdict was satisfactory, in that there was no disease behind the eyes. For the rest—I know the air of the doctor who hampers his patients with no restrictions because nothing really matters. But the kindness that thought about it was sweet.

Here, again, we came on the Peace rejoicings. There were sports and festivities for the women and children; and at night a "jolly" for the men, including the miners. Pam won the Ladies' Race, of which I have a photograph, but she has run clean out of the picture: only her defeated competitors are there.

There was a huge bonfire for the "jolly" and plenty of beer going, and we went up on the hill, the Twins going with us, to see the fireworks and the people enjoying themselves. We looked down on the Firth—from which the Fleet, except one or two vessels, had sailed away—and across the cold water to the lights of Rosyth, from which so many ships had gone out never to return.

Our host had written to someone: "You can swim or jazz (sailors of all ranks provided gratis to suit customers' tastes), play golf or ride (I have two donkeys and a motor mowing-machine, so there is a choice of mounts), or eat fruit in the garden, or anything you like."

But the sailors had gone—at least the ships had. In the little chapel at South Queensferry where we went to Mass there was a tarry and a smoky smell of seafaring men.

However, there was plenty to interest and entertain at Hopetoun. One Sunday afternoon when I went round the place with my host we came to a little mound on which had been a prehistoric castle, not a sign of which remained to my eyes, but I was very much pleased and impressed with Lord Linlithgow's reconstruction of it as it was. We stood there in the woods, where the first yellow leaves had begun to drift from the trees, while, very rapidly, he sketched the castle as it once was and the life it contained. With real vision, as though he saw it all, he indicated the various sections and offices of the building—the gates by which they went forth to battle, the fortifications, the courtyard: one could have painted a picture of it as he talked.

Imagination was not left out of his gifts, which are many, but there is not much one can say of a living man's, or woman's, gifts and graces; and I have fortunately no expectation of being able to do anything like justice to his brilliant qualities. His humour is, in a limited way, all I can glance at.

Any house in which he lived must be incessantly lively with his freakish humour. Our golfing friends, when we went home, envied us that we had lived under the same roof as a champion golfer in Lord Charles Hope. They asked us many questions about his strokes which we were quite unable to answer. I can only say that the champion golfer and tennis-player was singularly un-selfconscious, and amiably willing to play with those who were very far indeed from being champions. There was always brilliant tennis at Hopetoun, where champion was pitted against champion. One could only look on and admire.

Let me add a word about Sir Frederick Milner, Lady Linlithgow's father, whom to know is to love and admire. He represents a very fine type of old-fashioned gentleman. Almost stone-deaf from twenty-two years of age, he yet sat in Parliament for fourteen years. What splendid courage! He was a strenuous and untiring

worker in public life. When we were at Hopetoun that Summer he was suffering much from headache, but he was incessantly working for the ex-Service men, of whose cause he was the champion. When the headache at last stopped his letter-writing, he would appear with an enormous sheaf of letters to be posted; and this went on day after day. His geniality was so great that it broke through the barrier of his deafness and overflowed like a brightness on those who were privileged to be of his company. There was no shadow of his affliction upon him nor on those with whom he talked.

He talked Imperialism to me, believing that we were in agreement, while his beautiful daughter kept murmuring in delight: "He doesn't know that she is a Sinn Feiner. Oh, please tell him, somebody."

Lord Linlithgow had described my politics for someone, or said that he had, in these terms:

"I told him that you were a distinctly vicious woman where Irish politics are concerned, adding that although you would bite for the country that bore you while a tooth remained in your head, I did not believe that you looked on the destruction of the British Empire as an end in itself."

So, I was a Sinn Feiner to my English and Scottish friends, and even dared to call myself so, as I should not have dared with my Sinn Fein friends in Ireland, who would think me sadly lacking. Perhaps the Great War is too near and I know too much about it to believe in war again. Perhaps age has chilled my pulses. Perhaps the movement is too young for me. I have no fanaticism, and a spice of fanaticism is needed to make war with any kind of conviction. Yet I yield to no one in my love for the country and the people; and, if a long period of years lived out of the country has taught me that no cause and no people are altogether black or altogether white, it is a knowledge that comes to most of us with chilling age.

CHAPTER XIV

THE YOUNGS

AGAIN we travelled with people who were ready to speak of their sorrows—an old farmer and his wife from the Fife side of the Firth on their way to see their son's grave in France. The presentation watch given to him in his civilian days was laid in our hands for inspection and admiration, and while the mother whispered of her boy the father sat upright, his gaze on the landscape with a blur on his old eyes. Later on he talked of his farming, I being knowledgeable enough as a farmer's daughter to understand him and his tale.

Again there was an indomitable woman who had a dead son and a son worse than dead, with a mind unstrung because of the War. She had no useless lamentations: she would have done it again if needs be, but perhaps she saw both her sons in "the puir laddie" in khaki, a lumpish boy who slept unendingly even while he was fed, through the hours of the journey, for she was very tender to him. He only woke up once sufficiently to say that he was "'goin' to Injy in the mornin'," and was sound asleep again.

Hers was the most intolerable tragedy of the War. A son who had been good and capable and fit to take his place among men and to fill an honourable place before the War. Afterwards a mental and a moral wreck. Could anything ever justify the War which brought such things?

Yet the indomitable little woman looked out at the golden landscape through which we were passing and said that she would not have had it otherwise, because Scotland was safe.

We had been nearly a month away and our Summer was drawing to a close. We were giving up the little house on the 11th September and the servants were returning to Ireland, but as Kenah Hill, to which we were going, was not yet ready, we had still two or three weeks to stay.

I do not remember hotter weather than that 11th September. We were going down to Cookham to stay with very old friends, Sir George and Lady Young, who had been my neighbours in the days of my girlhood. Whitehall, my old home, lay just under the hill Belgard, which had belonged to Lady Young's father, Dr. Evory Kennedy, and later to the son of her first marriage, Sir Henry Lawrence. I had not seen Lady Young for many years—not since we had dined with her in Queen's Gate, somewhere about 1904, when I had Herbert Paul for my right-hand neighbour at dinner; but we had kept up an intermittent and affectionate correspondence, and for a long time there had been a prospect of a visit when I should revisit England.

It was hot. We sat in the Great Western Station at Ealing waiting for the fast expresses to stir the stagnant air as they rushed by—we had been uncertain of our train and had rather a long wait. We made an expedition just across the road to get ices and almost succumbed on the way. In the train going down everyone was asleep, the faces white and exhausted: I think there is no place in the world as hot as London and that south-eastern corner of England when it sets out to be hot: at least there is no place which has so little alleviation of the heat.

Formosa Fishery on its lawn at the river edge over against Clieveden Woods, all its windows wide open and an awning over the verandah, looked and felt cool. There was a backwater at the side of the house, and there was always the cool sound of oars or a paddle plashing in the water to mitigate the heat. Pat told me once that

in the club-rooms in the East they hang pictures of icebergs on the wall to cool the atmosphere for the imagination, as the colour of fire warms a room even when there is no fire, whence our red hangings and shades.

Cookham was certainly tolerable though the tropical heat continued. There were a couple of Serbian boys there and an Italian girl—Cookham was very hospitable to refugees or lonely people; and Hilton Young, now Financial Secretary to the Treasury, had made it a special work during the War to rescue and help the boys of the Eastern Allied countries. These boys had, I think, been adopted by Twickenham, and they were going to Cambridge. The girl was a lonely teacher in a school who was spending a portion of her holiday at Cookham, as a result of which she has since married the son of Mrs. Margaret Woods, the author of the well-known *Village Tragedy* and a "literary light" in the best sense of the word.

The river was very beautiful in those days, full of punting girls with young men lying full length in the punt, family parties, lovers hidden under the great trees that overhang the river, whispering together. For a little while that Summer the river became as she once was, the playground and the primrose way of London, covered with all sorts of craft, a coloured pageant of youth and gaiety.

One day Pamela, the Italian girl and myself went with Sir George in an outrigger skiff to Clieveden. Sir George had been born and brought up on the river, and would never have suspected that anyone could be nervous in his company. But it was a bad moment, that crossing with a whole procession of boats, including steam launches which made a tremendous wash, coming down the river and up it.

I had asked Lady Young fearfully, before starting, if it was safe.

"An outrigger skiff is never safe," she said; "but, on the other hand, George will be so hurt if you don't go."

So we went. We saw Clieveden with its long ranges of windows shuttered, for the family was away: its beautiful well-heads brought from Italy, crumbling in the damp climate, its gardens and pleasaunces. The first Astor—many a guinea of his I pocketed in the great days of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, when Harry Cust, the editor we were proud to please, paid his contributors according to their deserts—had made a curious commemoration of the light Restoration lady who lived at Clieveden, and, dressed as a boy, had held her lover's horse while he killed her husband in a duel. The date of the duel was set in forget-me-nots on the grassy lawn.

It was very simple of the rich man, whom I used to call the Golden Astor in the days when the Yellow Aster had a *succès fou*.

I should have enjoyed that visit more if I had not had before me the prospect of return. I can feel now the terror of it when I stepped into the boat, rocking in deep water, which a lurch to one side or another would upset. How carefully I trod the middle plank! How carefully disposed my not insubstantial person as I was bidden! We got back safely—but I doubt if I have been nearer death.

Of course these river-side people fell into the water and got out with unruffled calm. Only a few days before a boat had capsized with Mrs. George Young, a light weight, and she had come floating to shore like a Nereid. But I cannot recall the depths of the dark water, as we came round the little eyots and past the sailing swans, looking out fearfully for the steam launches, and worse, the horrible river steamers, without a shudder.

The Youngs had lived very much in literary society and with University people. Sir George, Winthrop Praed's nephew and editor, had had a distinguished career at Eton and Cambridge. At Eton as a small boy he had been the only friend of the poet Swinburne, who used to take refuge with him from his persecutors. Outwardly a rather backward, undersized little boy,

Swinburne was by then at home in the darker depths of English literature, such as the Reformation poets. One day Sir George found him in bed with a cold. "I say, Swinburne," said he, "you look awfully seedy." "Seedy yourself," retorted Swinburne; "thou art no better than a salvatory of dried mummy seed"—a quotation, I believe, from one of the Restoration playwrights.

Long ago in my simple youth I had met, through the Youngs, the Henry Sidgwicks—Mrs. Sidgwick was Mr. Balfour's sister—Professor Dicey (to whom I had the amazing courage to expound the Irish question of that day), that very brilliant person J. K. S., and other celebrities.

Leaning on the bridge that spanned the backwater, Lady Young told me:

"I remember one day Tennyson was here, and Thackeray's daughter, when it came on to rain. We were on the bridge, when there was a strange sound in the distance, and Mrs. Richmond Ritchie immediately quoted the Bard. Was it 'the mellow lin-lan-lone of evening bells'? It came again, and it proved only to be the lament of a cow whose calf had been taken from her. Tennyson was very much annoyed, especially as the quotation had been a misquotation. Then he discovered that it was raining and there was only one waterproof to the party. 'I had better take that,' said Tennyson, wrapping himself in it, 'for my life is the most valuable.'"

Lady Young retained the dominant and flashing beauty of her face in an extraordinary degree. She was as keen about affairs as when she was a young woman. The trouble in Ireland was then just a black cloud on the horizon, but she grieved passionately for what had gone before and what was to come. I doubt that anyone living in Ireland can quite know that fierce passion of grieving, for to live in England is to see Ireland all white. Later on, in the black Winter or the red Winter of

1920–21, she wrote to me: "Come and let us grieve together over Ireland." It made one almost wish that she had grown old in heart so that she need not suffer so much.

The politics of the house were most varied. Sir George called himself the last of the Liberals—I should have called him an old-fashioned Tory. His eldest son was a Socialist; the youngest a Coalition-Liberal. Geoffrey was absent from the family circle, as he was living in Cumberland. I don't know his politics, but I think of him as a sunny person: perhaps he would have acted as a buffer between the conflicting politics.

One day at lunch, all the family being present excepting Geoffrey, I looked round the table and observed cheerfully, "I suppose all shades of politics are represented here."

Lady Young said, "Don't trail your coat, my dear," and nobody else said a word. It might have been a solemn occasion if I could have been afraid of the Youngs, but I had known the sons as jolly little Eton boys, and I had the right to call them by their Christian names and to feel an affectionate old friendly interest in them and their doings.

But—"trailing my coat"! I had been accustomed in Ireland to meet and be friends with people of the most widely divergent politics. We may go to War for them, but we don't bother much in private life.

Why, if Irishmen living in a state of war in Ireland can discuss the subject, should it be "tabu" in this peaceful English family circle? Pondering this I saw a sudden light. The trouble with the Irish question always has been that it was an English question. For half a century it has been a sword suspended over English political life which would fall at times, dissevering friendships and family ties. For half a century it has been a spoke that reaction could at any time thrust with ruinous results into the wheels of progress.

Take, for example, this typical family of the British

governing class. Sir George had begun a career of brilliant promise as a political reformer when Gladstone split the Liberal party over Home Rule, put the Conservatives in power for twenty years, and parted Sir George from his oldest friends. And now here was Lloyd George and black-and-tannery again splitting Liberalism into two hostile camps, with Hilton Young a member of his Government and George Young renouncing his position in foreign affairs in disgust at Governmental oppression in Ireland and elsewhere. For these survivors of the Victorian governing gentry, with their Roman arrogance and Spartan asceticism, take themselves pretty seriously. Irishmen in opposite camps can be friends because at worst they look on one another as traitors; but these English were morally bound to look on a brother in the other party as a fraudulent trustee. England has materially divided Ireland and delayed its development, but it has morally divided and stultified itself far worse.

I think Sir George's aloofness from the politics of his sons was sweetened by his pride in them. Geoffrey had lost a leg on the Italian front defending the Alps, where he had become famous as the most daring of climbers. Hilton had lost an arm in that desperate adventure in the *Vindictive* at Zeebrugge. George had volunteered in the ranks after two years' adventures in the secret service. He was the first Englishman in Germany after the War and fought in the ranks of the revolutionaries. Last Winter I heard him lecture on the New Germany in London. Now I am a person who invariably dozes at lectures, sermons, and all long speeches. Only passionate oratory has ever kept me awake. My sleepiness is induced by the sound of the human voice going on and on, and is quite involuntary.

Well, George Young as a lecturer was quite another matter. He knew his subject thoroughly: he had essential things to tell; and he never used a superfluous word. His voice was at a steady level. I think it must

have been a beautiful voice to have reached my intelligence and kept it alert, where other voices would put it asleep. The lecture left one wishing for more, an entirely novel experience to me. The whole thing was so entirely logical, well-reasoned and essential—I must use the word again—as to be a delight. Afterwards people asked questions. There were slight pauses before he answered each. Then the illumination came. No one needed to ask a second time or to dispute the lecturer's premises.

Someone who had been contemporary with George Young at the Foreign Office said to me afterwards: "He was by far the most brilliant man we had."

I could well believe it, remembering that lecture.

He had been attached to the Embassy at Madrid at the time of King Alfonso's marriage, and he had been fortunate enough,—as he would take it—to be quite close to the Royal carriage when the bomb was thrown on the wedding day of the young Royal couple. He lifted the new Queen from the débris of the carriage. I can remember Professor York Powell telling me at the time how pleased and proud Lady Young was.

However, George Young was born an altruist and he preferred his freedom to the diplomatic career which doubtless would have been a very distinguished one.

He told us a good many stories about that day—of his rush to the telegraph office to get the news through to England that the King and Queen were safe before all news was shut down, but—dog doesn't eat dog, and a writer doesn't take another writer's stories. Few people can have as many stories to tell, with the ability to tell them, as those three brothers.

At night Sir George used to read aloud, in a very cultivated and musical voice. The whole atmosphere of the house was of cultivated minds and tastes. The strenuous sons brought in the life of the world outside.

The newspapers read there were amusingly diversified.

Sir George read the *Morning Post;* at least I think he did: I am sure Lady Young did not: and George and Mrs. George read the *Daily Herald.* I remember Mrs. George, who is a most attractive, fresh and fair young woman, coming in one day with the tale that she had been walking along the road reading the *Daily Herald* when a labourer on a farm cart stopped and said to her:

"Madam, allow me to express my pleasure. I am perfectly certain you are the only person in Cookham who has ever read the *Daily Herald.*" The labourer was the poet W. N. Ewer, then a conscientious objector and now foreign editor of the *Daily Herald.*

Lady Young had taken up the friendship with me where it had broken off thirty years before. She has the Irish temperament, warm, impulsive, generous. She would not spare herself. I remember a morning when she motored us to an early Mass at Maidenhead, and then off to Eton, which, as it was the Long Vacation, was lifeless, without the boys. We walked in the playing fields where, according to Wellington, England's battles were won. The place was full of crowding young ghosts.

She will die a young woman, no matter how many years she lives. I remember that morning with the chill of Autumn in the air—for the great heat had suddenly departed—that she insisted on taking the outside seat of the motor, leaving us comfortably in the warm interior, to our utter misery as may be imagined. We felt like Gilbert Chesterton on one occasion when he drove us home from a dinner and Pamela wanted to retain the "lower place." "Oh," said he, with a piteous groan, "would you have the whole world calling me the Bounder of Beaconsfield?" So we felt when our hostess took the seat by the driver, waving away all remonstrances.

Then came forth her son George. It was a good thing to watch, the struggle between these two dominances.

It was very short and very gentle. She yielded and he put her into the motor, wrapping her about tenderly with rugs, and we were off.

It was plain to see how she was beloved by her undemonstrative sons.

CHAPTER XV

EN ROUTE

A DAY or two later we went down to Chipperfield, where we had lived for three happy years. We had still friends there, though some of the dearest had gone, including our great and gracious old Lady of the Manor, Mrs. Blackwell, who had given a unique dignity and charm to the place. She died soon after we left in 1910, but I had not yet known the place without her. There was another empty place where had been the youngest, bravest, and sweetest of parsons' wives, so little like the conventional idea of a parson's wife that she afforded much tender amusement to her friends. One might have said of her as Cowley to Crashaw in Heaven:

> "Thou needs't not make new songs, but sing the old . . ."

for indeed Edith Machin's unselfish life was one pure harmony.

We went back to old friends, Arthur and Rosamund Rivington. For the first time we had no base of our own, and as it happened I had caught a bad chill in the violent changes of weather, so I had rather a languid week in the bright, charming house behind the trees of Chipperfield Common, with the kindest and most sympathetic of friends and hosts. It was bright frosty weather, a strange contrast from the sweltering weather of a few days earlier. The colours of the trees were all turning. Early Autumn had come; cubbing weather, while as yet it was the Harvest Moon.

Inside Little Callipers there was no lack of comfort

and warmth, but when one went outside, one remembered the empty places; and it was sad to go to the Manor House without Mrs. Blackwell and to the Vicarage without Mrs. Machin, to say nothing of a more intimate loss. I think much of the gaiety of the place had departed, or perhaps it was only so to me. There was the clean sweep of the young which one has noticed everywhere since the War, and those one had known as young and gay had assumed a careworn and a grey look. Perhaps I brought my own mood to it; but the place was as dear as ever, only—" Wanting is—what? " as Browning's poem has it.

We went from Chipperfield to Beaconsfield for a day or two to be near Rose Macaulay and the Chestertons, and there Pat joined us from Aldershot on the Saturday afternoon. He had to leave again on Sunday afternoon. He was always making these long journeys to be with us for a few hours, and they were very sweet, though we had still the sense of a possible irrevocable parting which the War had given us.

All that Summer Pat was coming and going, coming joyously but with a cloud over his departure. Just before this time there had been a gay, young Sunday, when we had lunched with Lady Mary Ashley Cooper at Lady Grosvenor's house in Park Lane with its poignant memories of George Wyndham. There were some young cousins of hers there too, and after lunch we all went to the Zoo in two taxis. It was a very young entertainment for me, only I was kept in countenance by the lady who was in charge of Lady Mary. We had all gone behind the animals' cages with one of the keepers, and the schoolgirls had stroked the tigress amid shrieks of excitement, and Pat, as the intrepid male, had carried a perfectly harmless snake about his neck, and the young ladies' maids, who were of the party and scarcely more grown up than their mistresses, had contributed their shrieks and giggles to the general volume of noise.

After tea we saw Pat off from Down Street, at

least, we did not see each other off, since we departed East and West respectively, from different platforms. There was not a creature in the station. Pat ran down his platform and shouted, and we heard him from ours, and all the echoes took up the sound. He going East and we going West—all the partings that had been and were yet to be, to quote Francis Thompson, were in Down Street Tube Station at six o'clock of that fine August evening.

The rooms at the local hostel at Beaconsfield in which we were to stay were full, when we arrived, of the luggage of a party of cinema actresses. We were not able to enter into possession till quite late in the evening, just in time to dress and go to dine with the Chestertons. That night we spent in a drift of powder, the cheap powder which has such a depressing fragrance. It clung to everything. We spent most of the Sunday with Rose Macaulay, and her dear little mother, who drove about the Beaconsfield lanes in the most delicious little donkey shay, that might have belonged to the days of *Cranford*, she herself in her proper setting, for nothing could be prettier and more Quakerish. I am sure the little mother had a Quaker soul, and that she had come back somehow to the place her own people had inhabited, for that is the Quaker corner of England. How she came to mother anything so brave and adventurous as Rose Macaulay I cannot well imagine. The little mother was a primrose, the daughter, a sturdy and honest Rose, with the sweetness of briar-rose. The mother was deeply religious, the lovely kind of religion that is all tolerant. She told me that in her youth she and the man she afterwards married belonged to a University Society, such Societies as existed in numbers in the simpler Victorian days. It was for the unmarried, with a certain implied disparagement of the married state. I belonged to such a Society in my youth. It covered a good deal of discreet flirtation. I might have been its President if I had not brought some Liberty patterns to a meeting and

displayed them to some equally frivolous souls with myself, while someone talked about the Cosmos and the Ego.

But Mrs. Macaulay, charmingly pretty and feminine in her mature years, confessed that hers was the first of the marriages that broke up the ascetic society. She looked at Rose talking about "the tedious topic of love," and wondered over her children, none of them married, and one a nun—for the matter of that, two of them natural nuns.

I am very glad Rose Macaulay has come to her own. Only yesterday I heard *Dangerous Ages* quoted in a speech by the Head of a Woman's College, who perhaps would have been unaware of *The Furnace*, *The Lee Shore*, *Views and Vagabonds*, all the lovely, early books of the time when Rose Macaulay was a romantic writer and not a brilliant satirist. I keep Peter and the Crevequers and Benjy of *Views and Vagabonds* in my heart. They walk with me as living people, and I could take their collective heads to my breast. The brilliant Rose is the world's Rose. The Rose of the early books and the poetry—her poetry has not yet received anything like its due—is my own and I keep her also in my heart.

After lunch with Rose Macaulay and a long morning, we had tea with the Chestertons, and afterwards, since we could not face another night of the cheap powder, we jogged away in an old taxi back to Cookham, where so warm a welcome awaited us.

There were still some visits to put in before we ran for shelter and a new base before the Winter. It was my very first experience of being without a base, and I did not like it.

The servants had gone home long since. We were on the world for three weeks. When I met them again Ellen gave me an account of their journey home by way of explaining her expenditure. Ellen's talk is like Browning's poetry: one cannot memorise it. Time and time again, when she has said something worth keeping, we have tried to keep it, but it has flown before

one could write it down. There is some subtle quality in her talk. But this monologue I rushed to set down the instant she quitted the room. Jane, I may mention, was the one friend they had made, a staid English servant, who admired Ellen especially and had a certain dog-like devotion to her. This statement was made, Ellen standing by my table, her eyes looking out of the window. She would have said that she had been brought up better than to stare a lady in the face.

"You gave me two pounds over the tickets and I said it was too much. We spent more than half of it and I'll tell you how it was spent. Well, we expected her (*i. e.* the owner of the house) to come in at a quarter to six, and what does she do but come in at a quarter-past five! We heard her goin' groanin' about the house—whether it was the castor off the chair Master Pat broke or the pillow he took that she'd found out the new one wasn't the same—it was a lovely bargain at seven-and-six: I never saw better—but anyway we drank our tea boilin' hot and we sittin' down to be comfortable at it, and off with us by the side-door draggin' our trunks. Then that poor good-natured thing, Jane, that couldn't bear to part with us but must come along to Ravensbourne Park. . . ."

"You mean Westbourne."

"Sure 'tis all the same. I never knew anyone as lost in London as the same Jane, and she eighteen years in the one employment. That was one shillin' and sixpence for the cab. I tried a shillin' but he held out for the sixpence. They 're very common, some of them, though it's hard work liftin' trunks. Have you that in your mind—one and six?

"Then two tickets for Euston Square. We let Jane pay for herself. I'm thinkin' you misdirected me altogether for when we came out of the station, not a sight could I see of Euston at all. The man was very impident —like as if the Strike was in his mind. 'A shillin' to

the Irish Mail,' he says, 'or you may carry them boxes yourselves.' That was two and six.

"At Euston we had tea, havin' been disturbed by *her* comin' in before her time an' groanin': the three of us was one-and-sixpence, but you needn't take any notice of that: it isn't down to you; but what good that Jane was comin' along! And if she ever got home safe there's no knowin'. Queer fancies some girls do be takin'. Well, after tea, we thought we'd go an' see Mr. Jones. Oh, that was the high official! And for all the height of him where he is, it's a bigger and a nobler job he deserves. He ought to be at 10 Downin' Street, controllin' the destinies of the Empire! His kindness and humbleness was most confoundin'. He took two turns with us up and down the platform, and I could have sunk into the earth with shame to think of it. The cook was fit to drop. She looked wastin' away, but when he began to praise you up and Miss Pam—he couldn't find words enough for that graceful child—I just turned round and told him what you said about him when you came back from visitin' him. The loveliest beamin' smile came over his noble countenance: you could see he was pleased and well-pleased. Well, to his man—the head-porter I called him—and a most affable person, very superior, there was one shillin'. Have you got that down? Three shillin's and sixpence altogether accounted for.

"I forgot to mention we'd seen poor Jane off after we'd had the tea; but when we were done with the gentleman if she wasn't waitin' for us, after all that hand-wavin' and handkerchief-shakin' an' she dryin' her eyes. Will you, for goodness' sake, write an' ask if the unfortunate creature ever got home safe? Anyhow I'd hardly given up rejoicin' we'd got shut of her an' had only the trunks to think of, when there she was again. She couldn't bear to part with us till the last minit, an' so she came runnin' up the steps after us when we thought she was safe in the Tube, but of course stood

aside while that gentleman was walkin' the platform with us and we the envy of all beholders. When we parted with him we had three hours to wait. I was vexed with that Jane. She needn't have started cryin' so early. Then we had more tea—one and six, but that doesn't go down to you. So at last the time came and we started off. This time Jane saw *us* off. She's a perfect old torture, doatin' down on us like that. An' what does she do at the last but fling in a parcel she'd been huggin' all the afternoon, which hit the cook with tremenjus force. It was very severe. An' what d'ye think the bag had in it but bananas? Wasn't it kind of the creature to think of it?

"All the same many a time that night I cursed the bananas. You know what that day was, simmerin'! Well, the night was as bad, an' you'd think the roof of the carriage would be down burnin' on your head. The like of bananas for causin' a ragin' thirst is grievous. Indeed I wouldn't like the poor thing to know what names we called the bananas. If it had been lemon-drops now! At last we drew up at Stafford Station. I had just strength enough left in me to roar at a porter, 'How long do we stop here?' It was the loveliest moonlight night you ever saw. You'd be pleasin' yourself lookin' at it an' askin' no better if it wasn't for them dusty bananas an' not a breath of air in it. 'One minit,' says he. 'Tea I must have,' I said despairin', 'or else ginger-beer.' An' he was a decent man, for he turned and run to the Refreshment-Room and he belted the tea into the carriage, two cups of it, an' the train startin' off. 'No ginger-beer,' he says. 'There was two cups—sixpence a piece—I'd have given a shillin': and threepence to that porter. But that's nothin' to you.

"There was a nice little person, the wife of a stoker, travelled down with us all the way—a real Christian woman, but as she'd got a berth we were parted at Holyhead.

"Sixpence to the porter that carried our boxes across the platform into the boat—that's four shillin's.

"Two shillin's to the stewardess. We had a cabin to ourselves, like ladies, no less, and the stewardess a most agreeable woman—but I took a sofa outside because the cook would be grumblin' at the smallness and sayin' it made her sick bein' so close, an' the waves dashin' in at the windows if you ventured to open them. We had tea there again, sixpence a head, but that's nothin' to do with you. Sixpence a head again for breakfast at the North Wall. Wasn't it enough for tea and bread and butter? I couldn't fancy anything else, though I wasn't sick but much amused at what I'd call the Home Chat of a lot of Americans on board. They were complainin' of the rations and one o' them had been in a nursin' home. Sixpence to the man that put up our luggage at the North Wall. Sixpence for leavin' it there till we got a lodgin'. It was towards evenin' when we found one down at the Park Gate—oh, the flyawayness of them that calls themselves friends!—out about the streets when you want them—a nice clean double bed it was at two and six the night. Twelve and six, it was, for we had to stay five nights, and sixpence to get back to the Kingsbridge. Now your money's accounted for and you're sixteen shillin's to the good. I thought my mother 'd never be tired of hearin' of the good times we had."

Our next stop was at Sevenoaks. At Victoria we saw on the newspaper-placards "Railway Situation Serious." We had known that the leaders of the men were in conference at Unity House. We had taken occasion to pass there and had been very much struck by the glimpse we had of some of the delegates, clean, decent, and responsible-looking men.

At Sevenoaks our hosts were the father and mother of one of the young officers who had lived under our roof at Brookhill for a time. A day or two after we had arrived there came Mrs. Harmer, the wife of the Bishop of Rochester, who was good enough to wish to know me

because of something of mine she had liked. The Bishop of Rochester was one of the Anglican Bishops who had read my *Flower of Youth* from his pulpit, as had the Bishop of London frequently, and the Archbishop of Canterbury on the last Sunday of 1918. Mrs. Harmer was very charming—a Somers from the West Country—with a peculiarly soft and pleasant friendliness, not to be found in the English middle-class who largely make up the dwellers at such places as Sevenoaks, who fill me, and doubtless I them, with an agony of discomfortable shyness. What the poor things must think of me, sitting by them at dinner one night, the next meeting them in a tongue-tied agony, which doubtless infected them, I cannot imagine. It is a question of values. I have no shyness where I know I have some value for the other person, however important, so that I am as bold as a lion and as frightened as a mouse all in one.

With Mrs. Harmer it was another matter. She was full of interest in books and writers, and of intelligence and spirit. A day or two later we paid a particularly pleasant visit to her and the Bishop. Walking round the garden he told me a delightful story. It was of some friends whose old and faithful butler had suddenly announced that he was going. It was an unheard-of calamity. The family was in tears. Did he want more wages? He should have them. Had anyone offended him? It should be atoned for. Was he not well? Then he must have a holiday and come back refreshed.

He said No, No, No, to all the questions. At last, hard-pressed, he told the truth.

"If you must know, it is that after all the years I've been here I'm dead-sick of the sight of your faces."

That staleness, undiagnosed by themselves or anyone else, would, I expect, explain many of our servants' tantrums.

Our host had come to meet us at the train, his son being absent in London. He had been a naval chaplain, and was a very mouse-like little gentleman, very kind, very

considerate, but quiet as a mouse. For two or three days he hardly spoke, though his quiet smile was friendly. He used to sit watching us at night playing bridge till ten o'clock, when he would say good-night and retire. About the third evening the young people went off to a dance and we were alone with him at the dinner-table. In the quiet talk something dropped out that led to a question. Then we discovered what Sevenoaks, with one or two notable exceptions, would never have discovered—that he was extraordinarily well worth listening to. He had been a hunter of big game, and he had been in the strange places of the world with his ship, and he had had eyes to see and a tongue to tell. With a little encouragement the talk flowed easily to our delighted ears.

"I remember the time when we were caught in a typhoon in the China Seas. You know where the centre of the typhoon is and how far it extends to either side, and you can usually clap on full steam and run out of it. It caught us in the Formosa Channel, and for thirty-six hours we were helpless. Every time we tried to stand up we were flung down again. We were battered and bruised from head to foot. The noise was intolerable. Every second we thought the ship must founder. We had to turn her to try to run out of the storm. The waves were mountains high. You have heard that every seventh wave is the worst. The thing we had to do was to turn the ship immediately after the seventh wave, and before another like it could come. The seventh wave left a tremendous sea. She was a handy little ship and she did it. A slower vessel must have been caught by the seventh wave. We were thirty-six hours in the storm before we got out. The vessel must have foundered if it had gone on much longer.

"I was on a ship that went on fire in the Indian Ocean. The fire burst out suddenly in the engine-room. The engineers escaped, but they hadn't time to stop the engines and they kept on working, and there we were

going on at tremendous speed, creating a huge draught as we went. The worst of it was that the magazine was beside the engine-room and we never knew the minute we'd be blown sky-high. We could do nothing but pump in the sea and hope we might get the ship flooded before the magazine caught. The whole bulkhead between that and the engine-room was practically red-hot. We just got the water in in time, else I shouldn't be telling you."

He went on to his captivity in Abyssinia. It was in the reign of King John, who came between King Theodore and the Emperor Menelik. There was an English Mission sent up to King John about some matter of interference with the Egyptians. King John refused to receive them or come to them, so that for five months they were prisoners and suffered the greatest hardships. "When he came at last all was changed. Nothing could have been more charming, and he treated us all with the greatest consideration. The cause of the trouble was this. There was at the Abyssinian Court a British representative named Plowden, and for him the King had a great affection. Plowden had been there many years, and he had a great desire to go home. 'You shall not go,' said the King; 'you are my friend and I cannot do without you.' 'I have been here many years and I am sick to see my own people and my own country. I must go.' 'Very well, then, you shall go; but not now when my nephew is in revolt against me. He will stop you in the desert and kill you.' 'He will not injure me.' said Plowden, 'I have known him since he was as high as my knee.'

"So at last the King allowed him to depart, but as he crossed the desert, with only one or two men for a bodyguard, he was set upon by some of the Prince's men. Now they had orders from their master not to injure Plowden, but he had a broken leg, which in the hard riding had become unknitted, and as he had his hand down striving to ease it, an Abyssinian soldier thought he was

feeling for a weapon and speared him. Then the Prince came up and was filled with anger and grief when he saw what had happened, and he ordered the man who had done the thing to be speared to death. They took Plowden as fast as and easily as they could to the nearest place where the injuries could be attended to, but he died of the wound.

"King John, when he heard of it, swore solemnly that for every hair of his friend's head a man should be speared. Then he got his army together and marched out against his nephew and overthrew him in a great battle, taking him prisoner and six hundred with him. I have seen that battle-field myself, and you could tell how the battle went—where they stood and where they retreated—by the bones, and sometimes it was just a line of bones, almost a single line. Now when the King had taken the six hundred men, and his own nephew one of them, his oath weighed heavily on his mind. He spent all one night in prayer asking for direction; and the next morning he ordered that every man including his nephew should be speared. He then sent an envoy to Great Britain to say what he had done, but they looked on him as a murderous savage and no reply was returned. So he had to show Queen Victoria he was as great and unapproachable a monarch as she—hence our captivity.

"The Abyssinians are, of course, Christian Copts, and very proud of it. The first question they always asked of us was if we were Christians too. They had beautiful churches and altar vessels and vestments. Surrounded always by Moslem races, they had to fight for their religion, which perhaps made them more steadfast. They have held the religion from the earliest ages. I believe your Church recognises the Coptic Church.

"Menelik? Oh, Menelik was a full-blooded negro, ugly, but immensely tall and very imposing to look at. The royal dynasty was white and very fair. Menelik was not even approximately white. He had proclaimed

himself of the royal blood when John died: he was Chief of —— before that. By the way, their churches are round like the Temple of Jerusalem and planned in the same way."

He went on easily to the old deserted city of Goa.

"When we went up to Goa in the year 1885 we found the old city, just the jungle and innumerable churches. The whole place was rotten with fever. That was why they moved the city and all its inhabitants to a healthier site. But the churches stayed, beautiful churches, with the most wonderful treasures of altar-vessels. There is St. Francis Xavier's tomb, with his life-size statue in silver. The monks had stayed when the people went, and they carried on with the services to which no one ever came. There are, or were, three hundred churches in the old city of Goa. You walked along the footpaths of the dead city and the jungle had overtaken everything except the churches. When we went up there the monks came out to meet us, heartily glad to see a civilised face—yellow-faced men, rotten with fever, trembling and shaking as they spoke to us. A few hours there gave you the fever. We went to one of the churches on Christmas Day—there were about a dozen of us. Nine came back and lay down with the fever.

"Talking of sport—one of the most amusing things I ever saw in that way was a show the Rajah of —— gave us. It was a series of fights between animals, beginning with the smallest. The first was a fight between two quails. You could hardly see them in the arena. It was the funniest thing to see them walk round each other and make little pecks at each other, all so small and dainty. After that there was a very fine fight between two cocks. Next a couple of rams fought. The best fight of the day was between a buffalo and a tiger. The tiger crouched, waiting to spring, and the buffalo kept galloping round and round him. Finally the buffalo rushed upon the tiger and gored him to death. Next came a fight of elephants. They hurled themselves upon each other, making the

most tremendous noise, trumpeting and trampling, till suddenly one fell on his knees, and scrambling up again turned and ran. There were no casualties beyond the tiger. The others were trained animals, much too valuable to lose.

"Once I heard the jackal cry—the cry of fear which he cries when he is set upon by a tiger. They call the cry —— I have only heard it twice. It is the most blood-curdling sound imaginable. I was sitting watching a water-hole in bright moonlight. All around were the tracks of the animals who came to drink. I was in the shadow waiting for a good shot, when, suddenly, the jackal shrieked at my ear. Apparently he had winded me. It was the most appalling sound of fear I had ever heard. I never wanted to hear it again. The second time—I will tell you about that some other day. Now I have to pick the roses before the rain spoils them."

He said with sudden naïve pride, "I have planted three hundred bulbs to-day," as though the suburban garden held enough for him.

"It is a horrible thing to shoot a monkey," said the man who had shot big game. "Once in India we came suddenly on a row of big monkeys skipping through the trees towards us. One of us thought their intentions unfriendly and fired a shot. It got a big female monkey in the breast. The others scampered up the trees and away into the forest. But the poor wounded thing ran towards us, her hand over the wound in her breast, begging us apparently to help her, telling us what she suffered, while the big tears ran down her face. We could do nothing for her. The wound was vital. I don't mind telling you that I had a lump in my throat over that monkey.

"The big monkeys are often very dangerous. Once when I was quite alone in an African forest about thirty big apes came walking towards me—the old dog-apes grinning and showing their teeth, making all sorts of uncouth noises. I didn't like the position at all. I stood

absolutely still: there was nothing else to do. They also stood still, staring at me and jabbering for a space of time which I thought eternity. They then went off without showing me any hostility in act.

"The apes have their roads through the trees as men have theirs on the ground. You hear them coming long before they are in sight, like a rushing wind. Once I watched a very old dog-ape spring across a gap in the trees. He caught the branch all right but it broke with him and down he went. He sat back on his haunches and I never heard such profanity.

"Hawker of the Indian Forests had a pet monkey. He used to live in a little house on top of a high pole. He followed us about like a dog and we used to pet and feed him. One day I was going shopping and I had a bag of rupees in my pocket. The monkey came along, and before I noticed him he had dipped his hand in my pocket and pulled out the bag of rupees. Up he went to his house and began eating the rupees as fast as he could. Soon his pouch was filled with them and hung out in a heavy bag. At last someone climbed the pole and brought him down; and a couple of native boys set to and squeezed the coins out of the pouch. I believe I recovered the whole lot.

"I once watched a monkey at his first experience of a looking-glass. He stared at his own reflection, getting very red in the face. Then he began making faces, which the monkey in the glass returned. He grew a still deeper red, and rushing up to the glass dealt the other monkey a blow in the face. Then he fell back, looked at his hand, and reflected for a while. Suddenly his face brightened and he rushed up to the glass again, but behind it this time, with his two arms stretched out quickly to nab the fellow who was mocking him through the glass. There was nothing there. He gaped in stupefaction and then he sat down on his haunches and talked to himself."

That two men who had shot big game in all parts of

the world, who had lived with the Bright Face of Danger for company, who had each in his turn been a prisoner in Abyssinia, one under John, the other under Menelik, should sit down by each other in a suburb mainly inhabited by stockbrokers, was surely a remarkable coincidence; but that was exactly what happened. The exception was a certain Major G——, a splendid, upstanding cavalry-man, for whom the rest of Sevenoaks was mainly non-existent. They met at a tea-party and immediately walked away together and could hardly be detached.

The older man had his adventures now in the garden. The other, the tale of whose adventures was not yet told, pursued his game also in a Kentish garden. He had a wonderful collection of butterflies and moths to which he was always adding. Here are some of his adventures in small-game hunting.

"I could not find a specimen of the humming-bird hawk-moth till I met a man one day as keen in such matters as I am. He said, 'Have you looked in your own garden?' 'I should never have thought of such a thing,' I answered, 'and I cannot imagine a more unlikely place.' 'Have you a bush of valerian?' he asked. I replied that I had. 'You'll find them there,' he went on, 'and you can pick off any number of them. But it must be between five minutes to nine o'clock in the evening and five minutes after.

"I was at the valerian bush at five minutes to nine that night, and sure enough I was able to pick as many as I wanted. I never could find them at any other time.

"You see these blue moths. They were only to be found in Cornwall, where the egg hung on the wild thyme till it reached the grub stage, when it dropped off. I tried bringing the moths from Cornwall and supplying them with conditions in every way the same as those they had been accustomed to. But we got no blue moths. As the eggs reached the caterpillar stage they dropped off

the bushes and there was an end to it. We tried feeding the grub with all the sorts of things such creatures eat, but they died and disappeared. Then a number of my friends planted wild thyme patches in their gardens, supplied themselves with blue moths from Cornwall and began to observe minutely. It was found that the ants—there were always ants in the neighbourhood of the blue moths—carried away a number of the grub. Further investigation showed that the Cornish ants did the same thing. Only in the case of the Cornish ants the grub became a blue moth, whereas with us it disappeared. At last we discovered that the caterpillar grub was the ant's scavenger. His proper food was the cleaning up of the ant-hills. Only in the case of the Cornish ants they did not eat their scavengers, whereas the other ants did. We introduced a quantity of Cornish ants and so we planted the blue moth—this particular one—outside Cornwall."

Imparting these things to us our host turns to the ants of tropical countries.

"There are the black ants which move in such enormous masses that they blacken the road they take. If any unfortunate living thing gets in the way of their trek he, she, or it cannot escape. The myriads of voracious creatures swarm upon the obstacle and devour it till the bones are picked clean. It is a horrible death.

"Sometimes, deliberately, some poor wretch is tied up and left in the track of the black ant.

"Those Eastern punishments are very cruel. In Abyssinia a man who had incited to mutiny was punished by being tied in the sun and left to hold three wild sheep, each by a hind leg, till the end of the day. If he failed he was to be flayed alive. The poor wretch did the almost impossible thing that was required of him, but he was a broken man by the end of the day."

"Like the gentle Persians," said the other man. "When I was there in —— the favourite punishment was to encase a man in plaster of Paris and leave him to

die. Ugh! what ingenious devils of cruelty there are in men!"

Major G—— had been Menelik's prisoner simply because he happened to get too near the borders of Abyssinia, hunting lions in Somaliland, and was imprisoned for a month to teach him better manners. It was a very easy captivity, and he had a delightful gaoler in an Abyssinian of rank, who looked on his prisoner with an easy tolerance.

"What do you want to shoot tigers and lions for? For the skins? I will send some of my hunters out and they will bring you many skins." And again, "What do you want to shoot elephants for? For the tusks? Come with me, and I will show you many tusks." Saying which he led him to a courtyard where there was a pile of elephants' tusks. "Any of these you will, you can take away with you," he said.

Once, when he was in the depths of Basutoland with a friend, they were told there was another white man lion-shooting somewhere in the forests. They tracked him down with some difficulty, and found that he was a certain Russian Prince Boris, shooting big game on his own, solitary except for his hunters. They found him living in considerable luxury, carrying about with him the things that go to make up a civilised meal—table-silver and linen, and even champagne. He gave them quite a splendid dinner and they asked him to dine in return.

He came. Somehow or other the hunters got flowers —from the desert! They had a shirt which they spread for the tablecloth; there was a small stock of champagne kept in case of illness, which they produced, careless of the consequences; best of all, they had a couple of bottles of soda-water, and they had whisky. They gave instructions to the native servants that they should offer whisky-and-soda all round, taking care that only the guest had the soda, while they had water.

At the end of the meal—antelope, shot for the occasion—the guest said: "You *are* luxurious fellows! Think of

your splashing soda round like that! Why, I haven't seen soda since I came out."

"You want to hear about rounding up tigers in the cave. Well, it was like this.

"The tigers were reported to lurk in certain caves in the hillside (it was in Ceylon), so I went up with half-a-dozen 'boys,' armed with tridents, on the prongs of which was rotten wood; these were used as torches.

"When we went up it was night, and the boys lit their torches and stood in a semi-circle round the lairs, or rather holes. It was their business to see that the tigers didn't slip out and get behind us. I, with my rifle loaded in two barrels, stood in the middle, the barrel of the rifle resting on the shoulder of one of the boys. When the torch gleamed on the eyes of the tiger I fired.

"The worst of it was that the concussion extinguished all the torches. Of course they lit them again as quickly as possible, but meanwhile we were in the darkness and no one knowing if the tiger was only wounded or not hit at all, or if, perhaps, there were two or three tigers coming for us, it might be from behind, having escaped in the confusion; in which case there would only be time to lower the rifle and fire sideways, at the ground.

"Elephant-shooting? Oh, yes, I've been on elephant shoots. You've got to get them in the head, avoiding the brain if you don't want to kill them. If you wound them in the body they rush away, probably to die miserably. Yes, the rogue elephant is a dangerous brute. I knew one who became a rogue elephant in this way.

"An elephant strolling out by himself, with no special harm in him, came upon a native who happened to be carrying a basket of sweets. The native ran away and the elephant ate all the sweets. Then he went round prospecting for more, and when the next man put up some fight the elephant killed him. After that he started on his career of murder and we had to make an expedition to shoot him.

" I remember one time in Ceylon the elephants took to knocking down houses as fast as they were built. No matter how strongly they were put up along came the elephants and razed them to the ground. There was a slump in building in Ceylon that year."

CHAPTER XVI

THROUGH THE STRIKE

CERTAINLY the other big-game hunter was very well worth looking at, as was his wife, who had hunted big game with him. They were a strange pair in Sevenoaks. She was very quiet and pleasant, with a look of splendid fitness and a clear, steady eye. Sevenoaks was not going to keep them. Now that the War was over, the boy at Eton, the girl somewhere else, they were off to the wild places of the earth, a pair of good comrades, with the same tastes and the same knowledge, each knowing the other perfectly dependable in a tight place. They were of the dominant and adventurous kind, and they looked it. Mrs. G—— devoted herself to her visitors, like any well-bred hostess. He was unconscious of any of us except our host, who snatched a crowded hour of glorious life back from the dusty oblivion which had long covered the great days.

We left him behind with Major G—— when we took our departure, and he did not come home till quite late. I expect it made a nine-days' wonder for Sevenoaks, or the part which was aware of it, that sudden violent foregathering of Major G—— with a man who sat in chimney-corners and said nothing.

Meanwhile, the Railway Strike had come. Sevenoaks was very hard on the men. Machine-guns was the remedy suggested. A man at a tea-party said bitterly that he had given many tips to railway porters but that he should never give one again. To which Pamela responded sharply: "Then you'll carry your own luggage."

We had carried our luggage all the Summer, while the porters waited on a male patron, so it was magnanimous of her to espouse their cause; but the artist is always up against the bourgeois.

The situation rapidly became acute. Food was running low, and the optimistic said the Strike would last six weeks. It was no time to be living on one's friends, so we decided to ask Mr. Jones of Euston what he could do for us in our difficult circumstances.

He wrote by return: "There will be a train leaving for Holyhead Tuesday morning. I have engaged a room for you at the hotel. Come to my office when you arrive at Euston."

We thanked Heaven for the mercy that had given us and the world Mr. Jones.

There was a train stopping at Sevenoaks at eleven o'clock on Wednesday morning, the first train for several days. It was two hours late, and it was packed; but with the neighbourliness of those days of need we were taken in. There were sixteen in the carriage, but we all had the spirit of high adventure and nobody grumbled. We sat on each other's knees in layers, and the people on the bridges and embankments cheered us, as we went creaking and groaning along. We had an amateur driver, of course, and there were fears of sabotage, happily not realised. The Sevenoaks Tunnel and the Merstham Tunnel were no joke in the circumstances. Only our high spirits kept us up.

At Victoria we all seized each other's luggage, which was good-comradely at all events, and I am bound to say the voluntary porters were a joy after the very involuntary ones. I said to an old lady who was contemplating her luggage, "This is a muddle." She replied, "I'd rather have it than six years of ordinary travelling," and immediately her luggage was seized upon by a charming young man.

Taxis were very scarce. We got our luggage to Euston and went in search of a meal. The daylight was already

dying—we had just lost our Summer Time—and we had to go to Ealing to collect some of our belongings, held for us by our dear Miss Hartys. Only that our warm coats were among them we should have left the things, so fearful were we of being stranded at Ealing.

The bus we took to Paddington was jumpy. The busmen expected to be called out that afternoon and were plainly very rasped in the nerves. "Probably our last journey," said the conductor, who was a bit shorter than usual with the passengers.

Paddington was picketed and occupied by military. The windows were all barricaded and the vast, echoing station was in dusk. No trains were to run after dark. It was four o'clock and going to be a tight fit to get back from Ealing, but there would probably be a train back about five o'clock.

No one was travelling who could possibly help it. My memory of it is that the train was practically empty and that we travelled in ghostly silence and duskness: there was perhaps an intention of not lighting the trains.

One was too anxious to enjoy to the full the humour of the volunteer porters. There was a cavalry officer at Paddington dragging a trolley about languidly: it was empty, since there was no luggage to carry. He wore an overall to cover his uniform, but his boots and spurs bewrayed him. There were groups of little boys from the public schools and naval cadets from Osborne. When a pretty girl asked a question there was a simultaneous rush to answer her, and an extraordinary desire to give information. But at the moment we could not enjoy these humours.

At Ealing, without leaving our taxi, we received our warm coats, for which we were to be grateful later on, a rug and various other belongings, including a bottle of whisky which had been delivered at the house after we left.

Our friends implored us to have tea, and one wanted to tell us about her trip to Portugal, but we were panic-

stricken at any delay: the dark portals of Euston beckoned us from afar as a most desirable haven, so we tore ourselves from the hands of these kind friends and fled back to the station, to discover, to our relief, that the five-o'clock train had not yet come.

At the booking-office our luggage was seized upon by a temporary porter wielding a broom.

"Let me carry these things for you," he said, not at all like the professional porter. I was travelling with a horrid incubus of a deed-box which I had had plenty of occasion to curse, and should have more. It contained my precious MSS., but I defy any man living, or any woman, to carry a deed-box unless with deadly danger to themselves and others.

However, he transported even the deed-box safely: then fell into easy conversation, as everyone did in those days. Where were we going? To Ireland? Oh, did we think we'd get there? Yes, we hoped so. Did he know Ireland? Yes—he knew Cork: he had been stationed there. He had played golf at Lahinch. Did we know Lahinch? Did one of us play golf? And so on.

Now and again he took up the broom, which was his insignia of office, strolled away, swept a few feet of platform, and came back again for more conversation.

"Your're a soldier?" one of us said.

"I beg your pardon; I'm a porter."

"Do porters play golf?"

"Some porters do."

He kept reappearing at intervals till the five-o'clock train was signalled at a quarter to six. He came then for the last time. "'Here she cooms,' as we say in Lancashire," he remarked, and we got no nearer to his identity than that, though he talked till the train, muffled in gloom, slid away from the platform. The few young ladies who travelled just then must have had a thrilling time. The volunteer porters were so susceptible, not to say "coming on." The group of boys

from Osborne greeted us as old friends when we arrived at Paddington, where the cavalry officer was still dragging his empty trolley, just as when we left, with the patience of a child with a toy-cart. We had no difficulty about a taxi.

If Paddington had been ghostly, Euston was appalling. A small door was opened by a big policeman to let us through. The policeman was talking to the pickets, quite good-humouredly; it was a sign of the inviolable good relations between the Londoner and his police, because there was a considerable crowd behind the pickets, and it would have been easy enough doubtless to rush the door, if they had desired it; but probably they did not desire it. Inside, the great courtyards of Euston were black as the Styx and of an appalling emptiness. Most of the station-platforms were in darkness, but there was a dim lantern here and there by which we found our way to the Station-Master's Office.

Mr. Jones received us with the beautiful manners unruffled. He had not been in bed for three nights and he was dazed. With the aid of the volunteer workers he had just got off nine thousand sacks of mails, the first dispatch for three days. But he wanted to give us tea, and everything had been arranged for us. We were to be fetched from the hotel in the morning at seven o'clock, we and our luggage. Weary as he was he had time for all the courtesies and kindnesses.

A telegram awaiting us at the hotel cancelled a dinner engagement for that night, made a fortnight earlier. We smiled at the futility, as though we should plunge into the dangerous world outside from the happy shelter of Euston.

The next morning we were duly retrieved—by a detective. We had to think of nothing. Everything was done for us, our tickets bought, our luggage weighed and put in, a choice of newspapers brought to the carriage-door. When we were settled in our corner seats we drew a deep breath of relief. We were on our way home, and

we were saved from being on the world of London for an indefinite period.

Towards the end of the long walt we saw Mr. Jones working his way to our carriage, top-hat shining, rose in his coat, all as usual. I cannot imagine any circumstances in which Mr. Jones would have excused himself from the last touch to the whole man. He was hung upon with ladies, old and young, all pouring agonised questions upon him, all needing reassurance.

"A man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind and a covert from the tempest."

That was Mr. Jones to the timid female traveller.

He reassured everyone as he passed, bringing order out of chaos, and arrived at the carriage door, perfectly urbane, self-possessed and smiling. He had had some hours of sleep since we had met overnight.

He wanted to know if there was anything he could give us for the journey—books, an extra rug or cushion—some—he brought it out hesitatingly—some spirits. It might be a long cold journey and spirits were very necessary.

For some strange reason at the moment, I never associated spirits with whisky. The bottle of whisky which I had carried from Ealing was reposing in a bag in the rack. I thought of nothing but sal-volatile. Did Mr. Jones think I was the fainting sort?

"Spirits! Spirits!" I repeated, my voice rising thinly according to Pamela. Then with a kind of giggle—according to her—"Oh! No! I never need spirits!"

She said afterwards that it was a piece of acting on my part, which amazed her—she could not understand my sudden minxishness—and she added that our dear Mr. Jones looked crushed, but I hope not. We were to have no chance of explanation for some time.

His last assurance to us was that we should certainly get to Holyhead, though he could not say at what time; so we went off quite happy, and fortified against the answers of officials at the stations we stopped at to the

passengers' questions, that they did not know where any train was going to nor where ours would arrive. No one could know. We smiled superior. We had Mr. Jones's word that we should reach Holyhead, late perhaps, but we should get there.

It was a very friendly and happy journey while it lasted. It would have been a hungry one if it had not been for the resourcefulness of the British Army, which was represented three strong in our company, one home from Russia, one from Mesopotamia : I forget where the other came from. The food was, of course, severely rationed at the station-buffets. An attempt I made later on in the day to get something for myself was frustrated by a more self-assertive countrywoman and townswoman of my own who literally snatched the last sandwich, which I had just bought, from my lips. But those master foragers of the British Army succeeded where others failed. Having been served at one end of the buffet, they appeared at the other end and were served there. After a short absence at Rugby they reappeared with a dozen scalding cups of tea, carried on a tray, featly, by one. The others brought cakes, fruit, sandwiches in equally generous quantities. As a decorative touch they had secured a huge box of chocolates and a box of De Reske cigarettes—I don't know that the latter came from the station-buffet.

That big provisioning was lucky, for we crawled along at a pace very far from express. We were being driven, of course, by amateur drivers and were quite happy. After the Strike, Pat, taking a draft somewhere, had a talk with an engine-driver on the L. & N.W.R., who had been in the Company's service for forty years. He said that 269 engines had been burnt out by the volunteer drivers during the Strike. They had neglected to put in water.

However, " What the eye doesn't see the heart doesn't grieve for " ; and we were quite happy with our amateur drivers. Of course our blood was running fast with the

sense of high adventure. Like the old lady at Victoria, we felt it worth a lifetime of ordinary safe, comfortable travelling. St. Christopher was looking after us surely. Is he the Saint of railway travellers? I know of none nearer. How busy he must have been watching over the Tube trains in those days! for the driving of the Tube trains was reported to be weird.

We chaffed each other about each other's chances of getting home. Some were for the North—for Scotland, for Liverpool, for Birmingham, for the Welsh stations. Not one for Ireland. We had not yet realised what an incredible, unhoped-for joy it was going to be to find someone for Ireland!

We secretly suspected that the others were going to have a bad time; but we *knew* we were all right. Had not Mr. Jones told us so? I expect the same thing was in the minds of the others as regarded themselves and us.

We got to Crewe just as evening shades were falling, and there we were told that there were no trains going anywhere; not that day certainly: probably not to-morrow or the next day or the next. An exhausted guard could give us no guarantee that we should ever leave Crewe.

All the friendly people were swallowed up in the mists and shadows of the great dim station. We never saw any of them again. There was a gentleman who was probably in normal life a carriage-greaser; now in the breaking-up of all the laws he assumed some authority and drove us hither and thither with an incredible roughness which I charitably ascribe to flurry.

At first, I must confess, it was sheer panic. Pamela kept her head, but she too was terrified. Somebody had taken out our luggage and left it on the platform. It won no recognition from us when it stared us in the face. What did we care about luggage? I never have before or since felt such a despairing indifference as to the fate of my worldly goods.

The first hint of reassurance came with the sight of a young travelling soldier taking charge of an obvious

widow with a young baby. The Good Samaritans were at the moment busy getting out the luggage, much helped by the soldiers who were in possession of the station. It is at such a moment that one appreciates the trained man. If Disarmament comes I hope there will be something, some force, to replace the helpfulness, the resourcefulness, the efficiency, the amiability of the Army as it was at Crewe that gloomy afternoon.

Someone told us that we should find the Irish Mail in No. 7 Bay. We were tired of being told that it would not go that day nor the morrow nor the next. After many adventures we discovered a derelict Irish Mail in No. 7 Bay. It looked as though it had been there fifty years—a superannuated Irish Mail, with the dust and cobwebs of long neglect upon it. In fact there was no proof at all that it was the Irish Mail except that someone had chalked up "Irish Mail" upon it in large letters.

However it was *A* Irish Mail, and our hearts lifted at the sight of it. We were alone in No. 7 Bay, and it was ghostly, with the dark coming. We took possession of a carriage as one would creep into a little fort against the ravening world, and put down the impedimenta we had been carrying with no consciousness of them. We were going to sit in that carriage of the Irish Mail till it went, or till our skeletons were found there years and years afterwards.

While we drew long breaths of relief, and even began to think of retrieving the luggage, probably by this time lost for ever, there arrived the ex-carriage-greaser and ordered us to get out. We sat tight and he gave in suddenly and went off again with an absence of fight that proved his futility. Pamela went in search of the luggage, leaving me to hold the train against all carriage-greasers or other enemies.

While I waited, in the ghostly darkness, alarmed but enjoying such delicious thrills of excitement as made me forget the pangs of hunger, I heard voices, Irish voices!—

voices I recognised! I had been sick for an Irish voice to give me comfort. Oh, Constantine Curran of Dublin and Helen Curran, your voices were as the heavenly choir!

They were the first drops in a shower. Other Irish travellers were discovering No. 7 Bay. The carriages began to fill up. We were like one large family. People put in their heads at the carriage window, girls travelling alone, or in pairs, and said, "Oh, please, may we come in?" and were welcomed with enthusiasm.

No. 7 Bay grew darker and darker. There was only a distant glimmer of light from a main platform. Our luggage had arrived in charge of the British Army and had been put in. A magnificent Sergeant-Major, with bristling moustaches, had come to the carriage-window to reassure us.

"We are here to protect you, ladies, and you may be sure that nothing will happen to you while one of us is left alive."

The younger ones with Pamela went forth into the town to forage. The buffet was exhausted. It was there the last sandwich had been snatched from me earlier by a female cormorant. The hotels were crowded to the last available inch of space. But if they had not been, nothing would have tempted me to go forth from that Irish Mail. It might be derelict and cobwebby; it might have lain for fifty years in No. 7 Bay; but I was morally certain that if I left it for ten minutes it would get up steam and go.

The foragers brought back candles, matches, a loaf, butter, potted meat, and some fruit, with a knife and a couple of plates. We fixed up a candle or two and prepared to make a meal. We knew the ex-greaser would come along and order us to put out the candles and abandon the train, but we were prepared for that by this time, and to rout him, by force, if needs be.

It was going to be rather cold. There was a glorious fire in the nearest waiting-room, which was crowded with

refugees. When we went in they implored us to stay; they might have been our sisters. We only got away with the promise that if we were cold we would return. They were going to keep a glorious fire all night.

We were just settling down, when a young officer came to the carriage-window. Was anyone prepared to join a party in chartering a motor char-à-banc to make the journey to Holyhead? If a sufficient number could be obtained he was going to telegraph to Chester for the char-à-banc.

We jumped at it. The requisite number of passengers was easily made up. He went off, and returned after a while to say that the char-à-banc would come for us at eight o'clock or thereabouts.

The greater number preferred to stick to the Irish Mail. There were alarmist rumours. It was pay-day, and there was an expectation that the strikers would rush the station that night, demanding their wages. Crewe was notoriously the storm-centre of the Strike. It was better to be out of it.

We left the provisions to those who elected to stay. Two independent young ladies had chartered a motor-car at nine pounds to take them thirty miles. Those who came on by motor next day paid four pounds for their seats, so we got off very well with the payment of twenty-five shillings each, luggage included.

I should like to mention that when we sorted our provisions for the night, and perhaps the next day, the fact that I was in possession of a whole bottle of whisky was the cause of some gratitude in members of the party. If you will think of it, with the prospect of spending the night in the train, and perhaps the next night and the next, it was an uncommonly useful possession. One of the men thought that with some boiling water, which we were to get at by way of the waiting-room fire, added to a little whisky, the discomforts of the night might be much mitigated. I felt that I was deservedly popular with him and other gentlemen. However,

as it proved, there was no occasion for the comforting draught.

The hotel mercifully rose to the occasion and gave us, who were going to travel, dinner. We made our way through the crowds of strikers outside without any untoward adventure—they said, I think, that there was a crowd of four thousand men around the station—and we much admired the excellent good-humour and good-sense with which the policeman on duty repulsed any attempt on the part of the strikers to get into the station.

"Come now, Matey, you don't look as if you was goin' to Liverpool," he said to a pretended passenger. The English crowd at such a time is very unlike the crowds of the more hot-blooded nationalities; one could hardly imagine that smouldering quiet ever leaping to sudden flame and fire.

The char-à-banc was promised for eight o'clock. The excellent Sergeant-Major was taking out our luggage for us from the Irish Mail, when the ex-greaser arrived on the scene. I think he had spent the intervening hours in asserting his authority and being repulsed with heavy losses, for his temper was not improved.

"You touch that luggage at your peril!" he shouted.

"But it is ours," we said.

"It may be yours and it may not," he retorted. "All I know is that I'm responsible to the Company for passengers' luggage. You put that there box right back, I tell you."

The Sergeant-Major was unequal to saying more than, "Look 'ere, old bean! You keep your 'air on, or else you'll get a fit," while continuing to haul out the trunks.

The greaser went away, after a violent demonstration without doing anything, which was a way he had. The Sergeant-Major went on quietly and efficiently loading up the trunks on to a trolley he had secured.

"I'm afraid I'm very slow, Miss," he said apologetically

to Pamela. "You see, it ain't my job. You'll 'ave to be very patient with me."

"Oh," said she, with heartfelt gratitude, "I don't think you slow at all. I think you an angel."

The Sergeant-Major saluted respectfully.

"Very kind of you to say so, Miss, I'm sure," he said. "It isn't wot I deserve."

"Oh, never mind what you deserve," she answered, "you *are* an angel."

We ran round at the last moment, as we thought, to say good-bye to all the kind people in the waiting-room, who implored us to stay with them by the warm fire and give up our wild expedition, but the die was cast. We need not have been in such a hurry.

We sat from eight o'clock to ten by the door through which we were to emerge, twenty of us, sitting uncomfortably on our luggage, in a singularly draughty situation. There was another Sergeant-Major there who took pessimistic views of our journey.

"I know every inch of the road between this an' 'Oly'ead," he said. "I puts it to you plain—you don't get there alive—*not* in a charrybang."

We didn't argue with him. After an hour or so of sitting on the luggage we were too tired. Only the arrival of a General, who had joined the party, prevented his expressing himself more forcibly on our folly.

While we waited other char-à-bancs drove up and other parties went off in them. They were in the nature of buses of a monstrous size, closed in, with velvet cushions. We hoped our char-à-banc would be like that, but it wasn't. When it lumbered up at ten o'clock it was open at the sides, with wooden seats set closely together, all facing the engine. It had some sort of a roof over it, which I think but served to make it more draughty.

We got off, amid the cheers of those left behind. Fortunately the night was mild, and we had our warm coats, and we were very tightly packed, which made for

warmth but had its disadvantages later on in the night, when people fell asleep on each other's shoulders. I had for next neighbour the lady who had snatched my sandwich, but let it be accounted to her for righteousness that during the night she fed me with chocolates.

We were quite lively till about midnight, at which time we passed through a village near Chester, the church clock of which displayed the hour in gigantic letters that affronted the moon. Soon after that everything grew hazy. One slept for five minutes and thought it an hour, and one woke passing through a town and thought it a town much farther on. As the hours passed things became stranger and stranger. The roof played the most amazing tricks. It never was a roof for a moment. It was a hedgerow; it was a high bank covered with flowers, it was cliffs and crags. Sometimes, after an effort which was torture, one retrieved the roof, only to have it slip away again. All that night was mirage. At Carnarvon we thought it was Bangor and I was not at all surprised, when next I emerged from sleep, to see the flooding white sea—but it was not sea at all, only mirage, and we had yet weary hours before us.

We woke up thoroughly at the Menai Bridge, where we got out and walked, since it was a question whether the heavy char-à-banc would get through, even unladen. Long before this was reached we had changed our driver. They were both military drivers; but one man's nerve was not equal to the strain of driving the heavy char-à-banc through the night.

It seemed endless, but we got to Holyhead at last when a cold white dawn was breaking. We had taken eight hours to accomplish the journey.

CHAPTER XVII

KILLINEY AGAIN

HOLYHEAD STATION, with the lifeless trains and the great station clock stopped, was something to remember. It was cold comfort at the hotel, where all the waiters were on strike and the hotel was being run by a handful of women servants, with a slim youth acting as manager, who had very little of management about him. There were no fires in the hotel, no lights nor hot water. But after two hours of frozen waiting we got some breakfast; and afterwards went forth through the crowd of strikers, who were being harangued by one of their number, greatly daring, to discover some friends who lived near Holyhead.

But on the way fatigue took us—made one of us at least blind and uncertain of speech—and sent us dragging back to the hotel, anathematising it because it would recede, or seemed to, as we approached it. At last, despite those vagaries of the hotel, we caught up with it and reached the safe shelter of a bedroom, where we slept like logs for three hours. I believe we had a preliminary wrangle about something or nothing, but that was the fractiousness of fatigue.

After that, we were our own women again. During the afternoon we each wrote an article on our journey, and posted it. Mine appeared in the *Star* two days later.

There were no day-boats, but there was the mail, leaving about 11.30 p.m. All that day refugees kept arriving. A soldier whom we had last seen at Crewe arrived in charge of a woman and baby. She had refused to leave Crewe the night before and he had waited on

her readiness to go. "What would she have done, poor lady?" he asked. "She was so frightened, and with the kid too."

Before I finish this part of the narrative let me say that we got safely on board, though it was a passage perilous through the unlit town and down to the harbour; that my accursed deed-box was carried by a young soldier with a hole in his lung, who could not be persuaded to give it up to one of us though he coughed and coughed—wherefore it keeps its own chimney-corner for the rest of its days: that a Dublin sailor, while conceding that all Ireland would be enveloped in the Strike by Monday—it was now Friday night—added comfortingly that if we wanted to go to the Tivoli or the Empire while there was yet time, there were two houses on Saturday afternoon. I wonder why he took us for frequenters of music-halls.

Then there was the bottle of whisky. It had been offered to many people, who had all said that a nightcap would be very useful and comforting, and we had agreed to toast each other with a nightcap, or some of us had. Well, there were no nights for a nightcap as it proved, unless you count the few hours on the boat. The many had reduced themselves to one good comrade who had spent his day, foolishly as I thought, lying out on a cliff-side, after which he thought a glass before turning in on the boat would be an excellent thing. I told him to come for it when he was ready. I had a hazy idea afterwards that I had seen someone like him hovering in the background while I was engaged in conversation with some of our amazingly helpful fellow-travellers. It might have been mirage, for he faded away gradually.

It was only when we were comfortably ensconced in the cabin which one of those helpful friends had secured for us, that I remembered the whisky. After all the people to whom it had been offered, who had accepted it with gratitude, who had enjoyed it in anticipation, it went to Ireland unbroached. I wonder what they

all thought of me! Perhaps they thought the whisky was a myth.

We settled down for the Winter at Kenah Hill, Killiney, where the servants and the dogs awaited us. Killiney would be a charming place if it was not for the stone walls which, all over the County Dublin, hide the sea and the mountains from the wayfaring man or woman. We were set well above stone walls and the rest of Killiney in the enormous house, full of emptiness, in which we were like peas in a bladder. I liked its great spaciousness and abundant light and air all the week till I came to Sunday, when I had an illusion of living behind a big closed and shuttered shop—I don't know why.

I had always thought I should love to live in Killiney—it is so very beautiful, and with enough people from whom to pick friends to one's mind. I had thought the same about Southborough when I went to live there—or at least of Tunbridge Wells. I had said, believing I knew, that in a place the size of Tunbridge Wells there would be *every kind*. Well, perhaps there were, but I had found only a few, really congenial spirits in Tunbridge Wells, of whom Canon Keatinge and Sarah Grand were two.

I dare not say how many I found in Killiney, because I live next door to it, and might possibly be living in it when these pages see the light of print. There were certainly some, and some I keep, though some have gone away. Killiney, as to its social constitution, was more like Tunbridge Wells or Bath or Cheltenham or Bournemouth than I could have believed possible in Ireland. There was one strange absence in it, the sense of exhilaration. Now exhilaration is something that overflows in Ireland. You are always coming upon it and being caught into its wild swirl and eddy; when it releases you it leaves you laughing and gasping, with an uplifted heart to go all the way with reminiscent gurgles and chuckles that make you ashamed to meet the eye of your sober and dignified fellow-traveller. It means "touching

the ground in an odd place " as you walk, and a sensation as though you were a balloon and might fly away at any moment, and it causes a rosy view of everything for some hours at least, and a waking-up at night with a sensation of something very pleasant having happened. There were only two places in Killiney outside Kenah Hill where we were ever exhilarated: one was a house and the other was the village shop, whereas in Shankill, its neighbour, we are exhilarated every day.

Killiney was thoroughly respectable and conventional, and you were called upon and expected to return your calls just as if you were in England; and if you did not call within a certain period it was taken as an offensive action. Another thing in which it resembled Tunbridge Wells was in that you knew the people who went to your church. There was very little crossing-over of the borders between the Churches except in the case of one or two people who were not above suspicion of unorthodoxy. We, who were accustomed to know everybody, found ourselves so severely restricted. Killiney also was a place where nothing happened. Plenty had happened and was about to happen, but Killiney went its undisturbed way. It was an oddly self-contained community, and I think that to many of its members it would not have mattered much if the sky fell so long as Killiney remained intact.

This is not to say that we did not meet kind and congenial people in Killiney: we did; but only there in Ireland have I experienced the strange desire to run away and call on the mountains to cover me which I had had at Sevenoaks. To be sure, such *farouche* shyness must in my case be very much aggravated, at least, by bad sight, especially when it comes to recognising one's friends by their voices and having no medium of recognition for those who are not friends.

It was the Winter—one of the Winters—when the combustion of the world was predicted because two planets were to meet and possibly collide on the celestial pathway.

I am sure I am putting it all wrong, but the lay reader will know no better than I do and the expert will bear with me and understand.

The planets did not collide; but, as a result of their being on the same road, there were great winds and the most magnificent red dawns I have ever seen or expect to see. We were rocked in our beds at night as though we were in the cradle of the deep. The clatter was deafening: since the windows had never been properly finished they rattled in their frames till at times you could hardly hear yourself speaking. When we closed in for the night we used to sit in front of the fire, with screens, each hung with a tiger-skin, drawn closely together like a little house. But the wind raved in all the space beyond the screens, and while that portion of us towards the blaze was roasted the other part was in Siberia or the Arctic regions.

Within the community of Killiney very little happened to us. That winter is as a slate over which a wet sponge has been passed. Pat came home in October on leave before going to the Black Sea. Beyond that my diary records nothing worth chronicling, just work, and coming and going of friends, and tea-parties and bridge-parties. Killiney was making her own of us.

But some time during the Winter began the mysterious shootings of the Dublin Metropolitan Police. There was a motor-strike that Winter, and the footpads began to operate, and suddenly Fear came.

I remember its very first coming. Now that the afternoons were dark we had arranged to visit our friends, Sir David and Lady Harrel, at Shankill, on the Sunday of the month which had the full moon, or the moon nearly full. Now Shankill and Killiney, while being neighbours and sharing the same beauty of mountain and sea, are, in their spiritual atmosphere, as unlike as any two places could well be. Beautiful Killiney had had imposed upon her a suburbanism which on Sundays was overwhelming. A suburb is never bearable on

Sunday. It is one of the acid tests of the suburb. Whereas Shankill, once you get away from the main road, is real, farming country which might be hundreds of miles from towns and suburbs.

At Killiney we were often sick for Shankill; and we were always sick on Sundays, at least till we could light the lamps and draw to the fire and forget the Sundayish feeling, which was in the very light and air, is always in the light and air of a town or a suburb on Sunday—let me say a Winter Sunday between 10 a.m. and tea-time, for the Sunday morning is beautiful. Rip Van Winkle waking up from his long sleep in such a place might say, "Hello! Sunday!"

It was good to leave the house with the feeling of the big shut-up shop, and the gritty roads between the dreary stone walls, and hie away to real country and a happy afternoon with those beloved friends.

One full-moon Sunday—that of October—passed off beautifully. It was probably a six-mile (Irish) walk from door to door, with some uncommonly steep hill-climbing; but we used to return in a mood of high exhilaration, just in time to dress for dinner, after which we went out to play bridge with some neighbours.

The full-moon Sunday of November was a day of many weathers. In the morning there was a beautiful still frost and bright sunshine. In the afternoon, when we started on our long walk, it had grown warmer, and there was a thaw. As we climbed up the hill near Rathmichael Church, close to our friends' house, we noticed over the sea a strange lurid cloud. It seemed full of fire. Suddenly there was a leap of light as though someone had made a flare in the twilight, as though it came with the spurt of a match. It was lightning. Suddenly the great cloud above the sea and the whole sky shook with the roar of thunder.

It was a fierce thunderstorm while it lasted, part of the strange disturbance caused by those meeting planets. When we came out after tea and the long comfortable

talk, looking forward to our brisk homeward walk, the sky was full of immense clouds which hid the moon. It was so dark that we had almost to feel our way.

As we passed the gate of Loughlinstown House, by the Big Tree, something stirred under the wall, a blacker blackness against the shade. It was only a man, probably waiting for someone, but no cheery good-night rang out, and suddenly Fear was behind us, around us, pursuing us. There were no more of the happy moonlight walks. The unconscious confidence with which we had walked about the country roads was over and done with.

The shooting of the police went on. It was very mysterious. In Dublin one saw the big policemen stand unhappily with their backs to the wall, always with a forlorn look of seeking cover. The Dublin Metropolitan Police district came as far as Killiney. When we went down the steep hill to Dalkey we were pretty sure to come upon a young constable standing with his back to the wall.

We always stopped for a few words with him. Everyone was sorry for the police. The Sinn Fein young men at the village shop were bitter about it.

"It is shameful to kill the police," one of them said to me one day; and there was very often a policeman leaning by the door-post talking to the young men as we passed, sure, for once, of the safe background of the friendly shop.

In January, 1920, came what was called the Ashtown affair, *i. e.* the attempted shooting of Lord French, who was saved by the incredible accident of the West of Ireland train being a minute or two before its time, certainly the first time such a thing happened since the line was made. I don't think the police were very much in evidence that Winter. They had given up patrolling the roads, and, with the absence of motors, the last safety of the pedestrians was gone. There was to be a period of at least eighteen months before the unhappy civilian could call his soul his own.

1920 opened with the false report of Sir Horace Plunkett's death in America which came on New Year's Day. It made everyone profoundly sad till the report was contradicted a day later. Such things were felt and written and said about him in the interval as might make any man proud. Of course he can never know what people felt. If he could it might make up to him somewhat for the slings and arrows which come to the man or woman who leaves the safe obscurity of private for public life. I remember how we climbed up on to the golf-links and looked over at the greyish-green roof of Kilteragh, shining in the misty sun, and talked of what a loss he was; how he had done things no one else had done; how his house had been a meeting-place for people of all parties; how there was no other house in Ireland that could fill its place and no other man to fill his. We mourned him for one day and night. The next day, when we went out for our morning walk, someone came running to meet us calling out: "It's a mistake. He's not dead at all." It was an enormous relief.

One day that midwinter we had gone out to tea. There were some young Oxford men, members of a football team which was playing Trinity; and young men in Killiney were scarce enough to be interesting. I had discoursed very eloquently upon the courage which had come to people since the War. "Now, *I* am absolutely fearless," I said, "whereas I used to be afraid of a multitude of things."

It was rather dark when we left to go home and Killiney was ill-lit. We met one or two honest workingmen who bade us good-night. There was a steep lane which was a short cut to Kenah Hill, running by people's garden-gates, and bearing traces still of the time when it had been a mountain road, in the quantities of briars that lined it.

I imagine that if we had been feeling perfectly fearless we should have taken the lane. There had been some talk of the footpads and the mean robberies of violence

which had begun to be fairly common. We took the road instead—the precipitous little road which only led to Kenah Hill and one other house. It was the kind of road motors will not face unless you rush them at it—and, as for horses—we used to pay for a cab to take our luggage when we came home with any and walk up ourselves. No one with any heart could go up that road behind a horse, and it was nearly as bad coming down, with the horse slipping and sliding all the way.

The worst of those steep hills at Killiney was that hurry was impossible. No matter what danger was at your heels you could only walk as fast as you might, nor turn your head. Of course, the foul fiend following had to foot the hills too; but that did not occur for comfort.

Just as we began to climb the steep hill we became aware that someone had turned into the road behind us. We glanced back fearfully. There was nothing but a light which might be a bicycle lamp or a torch. I have beaten a thunderstorm on a straight road before now, but to rush that hill was to court collapse at some stage of it.

Up we went, the invisible person behind following us. With honest intent he could only be going to one of two houses, ours or our neighbour's.

He was almost at our heels when we slipped inside the wicket-gate of our own garden. At last we could pause to take breath, to give rest to our labouring hearts and the pulses that throbbed in our temples. We waited just inside the gate, secure of his passing by. Then—*we heard him prop his bicycle against the gate. He was following us into the dark garden!*

After all, he was only attending to the gas-lamp outside the gate.

Again we went to dine with Philip and Deena Hanson—dear friends—at Kingstown. Deena was one of the daughters of that brilliant scholar and wit, Professor Robert Yelverton Tyrrell of T.C.D.; and Philip Hanson, who had come to Ireland as George Wyndham's private

secretary, was Mr. Commissioner Hanson of the Board of Works, and is now Sir Philip Hanson, its Chairman, one of the four-square, dependable, kindly Englishmen who are apt to fall in love with Ireland and the Irish, and to have the love returned.

We had a very good evening with these friends and we had trailed our coats politically for the other guest, Mr. Maurice Headlam, the Treasury Remembrancer, who had absolutely refused to take up the challenge. The honest Englishman is given to parting with his anti-Irish prejudices, if he arrives with them, and to seeing the Irish side with remarkable thoroughness and rapidity. *He* trailed his coat when Pamela said there was more bell-heather in Scotland than in Ireland. He very nearly called her anti-Irish.

We went home quite happily by a train that arrived at Killiney somewhere between 10 and 11 p.m., and climbed to our eyrie without misgiving. The next day we heard that a couple of brigands had travelled by that very train from Dublin, had gone up the hill, presumably before us, and had relieved some good people of the valuables they carried.

After that our Arcadian security was all at an end. When we toiled up between the high walls, we went with beating hearts, wondering in our own minds which of the neighbours would come to our rescue in case we screamed. We had not yet arrived at the terrible helplessness of acquiescence in our own or anyone else's fate that came to the hapless civilian in the following Winter.

I think we counted then seven of our male neighbours whom we thought would dash to our rescue if necessary. Perhaps we were optimistic.

Then we began to frighten ourselves. I have mentioned that Kenah Hill had a lower story, consisting of four bedrooms and a billiard-room. As there was no basement this sat on the grassy lawn. A door admitted to it and there was a range of big windows: Mr. Dubedat, or his

architect, must have believed in air and sunlight. This story was shut off from the upper part of the house by a door at the head of a flight of steps, but the bolt that should have held it was loose in its socket, and shaken so violently by the wind that five minutes after you had bolted the door it was open again. When we went up to bed on those wild Winter nights it was always a bit alarming to find that the bolt had shot back, and that it would do the same thing as often as you shot it to. With the wide unshuttered windows downstairs, well—any burglar might smile. All the same, Kenah Hill must have been the most wonderful tonic for the nerves, for we slept like lambs amid the greatest clatter and tumult of the wild Winter nights, when the planets met for the first time for hundreds of years. If you could imagine stage-thunder magnified a thousandfold, that was Kenah Hill that Winter. But the dawns were worth it. They began with a faint flushing, a palpitating, of the East. Then the East was a-fire—not a-light and showing a light, in the firemen's phrase, for that would connote some yellow. No; this was blood-red: living, like the blood you see if you hold your fingers against the fire and your skin is transparent. The dawn came flowing and pulsating in, miles upon miles of it, the sea tossed like a scarlet fleece, the mountains taking fire one after another, the Heads deep rosy purple, the very green of the grass and the cattle in the fields turned to shining scarlet. I would not have missed that Winter at Kenah Hill for a great deal.

But, about the terror. Well, perhaps it was that unbolting bolt that suggested it. Perhaps it was the sighing and straining of the door which led on to the roof, where was a fine promenade for an unrivalled view. Perhaps it was the eeriness of the wind in a closed room. None of these things really frightened us; it was a house where one was immune from real fear.

But—I got the idea of a glorious "blug." It was the story of a young woman, in that very, enormous

house, left quite alone by a succession of accidents. When she is alone at night a horrible negro breaks in, and after various "bluggy" incidents, chases the lady all over the roof, and finally meets his deserved fate by falling through a cracked skylight and breaking his neck on the hall-table.

Now, if I had not set out to be so realistic it might have passed for a "blug" to my mind. I have written many "blugs" in my time, and familiarity breeds contempt. But as I used the familiar furniture, the windows, the doors, in my drama, I was suddenly overwhelmed. Not only I, but Pamela and a girl who was visiting us.

When I began reading it aloud after dark they asked me to keep the rest of it till morning. They could bear it by morning light, but when dark came again we began to remember. We said to each other: "The servants must on no account know." I, as I went up and down the great house, kept going over the incidents of the story. There was the window through which the lady looked and caught the gleam of white on the negro's teeth. There, she leant over the gallery and he saw her. There was the very mat on which the poisoned bull-dog lay rigidly. The green-covered table in the hall, with the glass bowl on it which had the callers' cards, made me shudder; for was it not just there that the negro had described that horrible somersault before sliding to the floor a twisted and crumpled mass? I found myself thinking of where one might find refuge if a negro should come in. The story appeared in *Pearson's Magazine*, and I only hope it thrilled other people as much as it thrilled us.

And all the time there was not a shadow or trace of any previous occupant of the house left behind. We used to say that it had no personality, no soul. Perhaps no one had ever lived long enough in it to influence it.

I used to go upstairs in the dusk those Winter afternoons to change for the evening, with no more light than the pale glimmer of a broken sky, for all the lights

were far below, and I was never afraid. To be sure, the communicating gallery, over which you could call to someone in the drawing-room below, made for a great cheerfulness.

I loved the space, the light and air of Kenah Hill: and in the matter of health it certainly did wonders for us. We could have put up twenty people any night at all and given some of them dressing-rooms; and there was a desert of space to take all one's belongings. Added to which we had that invaluable thing, the landlady who never bothers—which was an element in our peace that Winter.

CHAPTER XVIII

1920

One of those Winter days Captain Mulholland, an old Claremorris friend, came to lunch. He was at the time Lord French's Military Secretary. He had written to us a little earlier that he was waiting for delivery of his new car to come. When he announced himself we naturally supposed that the new car had been delivered.

We were going on a visit to the Dunsanys that afternoon. It was a troublesome journey with luggage, if one had to go by train. He offered to leave us and our luggage at the Broadstone, an offer which we gratefully accepted. Only when our luggage was already in and we emerged on to the hall door-steps did we discover that the car had a military driver, and was one used by Lord French and his staff.

Well—we were into it! Perhaps, if we had had time we should have done the proper and prudent thing and said: "No, thank you." It might very well have been a dangerous journey; but as a matter of fact we met with no more untoward happening than that the small children of the Protestant, and presumably the loyal, school at Killiney threw a handful of mud at us.

Dunsany was always pleasant and interesting. There must have been some trouble on the railways, for, at Drumree Station we could find no porter to help us with our luggage. Finally, a postman did it and failed to notice our tip when it was offered. We said we could believe anything of Meath people after those porters, and sighed for our own amiable South County Dublin people with their friendly good manners.

Lord Dunsany read aloud for us after dinner. He read us the first chapters of a most wonderful romance. I could only think that it had a kinship with *Gil Blas*, that it was touched with a like immortal hand.

He was very enthusiastic about America, from which he had just returned. It was the last country in the world one would have expected him to be enthusiastic about, that is to say, if he had not visited it. But, apparently, the Americans know how to welcome and speed their honoured guests as we do not, and, despite some little difficulties, it had been roses, roses all the way for the Dunsanys. At the moment their late distinguished guest held the Americans to be *the* people of the world.

The memory of how the Americans had honoured Art and Literature made him perhaps intolerant of his comfortable neighbours, to the mass of whom such things would count for nothing. The country of rich grazing lands and rich graziers would have cared as little for "Bainding and Boedry" as the first Hanoverian King of England. Lord Dunsany was out to avenge Keats on the county of Francis Ledwidge and himself, moved thereto by the memory of how America honoured the distinguished stranger.

We turned over his books of strange pictures, the shadows done in lamp-black, as weirdly imaginative as anything of Blake. This man of genius plays with the elemental things of Earth and Hell and Heaven. The strange drawings were unforgettable—the Punishments of the Damned made a series of them: there was one of the Golden Gates: one of a man following a track across a desolate plain towards thin, saw-like mountains, which are the edge of the earth, no sign of life anywhere in the desolation except tracks in the snow where a pair of monstrous feet have padded before him. Behind him slinks a foul beast—Remorse following the man, Lord Dunsany said. I wonder what the County Meath would have made of it.

At that time he was designing seals and having them cut. One charming design of a winged messenger carrying a letter was misunderstood by a County Meath lady who came to lunch one day. He was very short with her. He said he was avenging Keats and incidentally me—which inclusion could only be attributed to his good-will. I am quite sure she deserved it. After all, against stupidity the gods fight in vain.

He revealed himself in quite another light when one of his guests, a very appealing and pathetic young war-widow, fainted at the dinner-table. One realised suddenly that this man of a strange genius was very kind and could be very helpful and human. Apparently without effort he carried her upstairs to the drawing-room, no light thing, and laid her full length on the floor. The readiness and efficiency were something one had not looked for, and the real kindness and concern, tenderness even. It was a glimpse of him I was very glad to have had.

Meanwhile, the shootings continued, to the bewilderment and perturbation of peaceful citizens, for whom the mystery added to the terror. One of these days it was Alan Bell, who had preceded my husband as Resident Magistrate at Claremorris. The circumstances of his death were *macabre*. It was the first instance of a tram-load of unarmed citizens being held up by an armed body of young men. We grew quite used to it afterwards; but at the time, I imagine the people who were in the tram with Alan Bell did not much like talking about it. I never met anyone who was in that tram, nor did anyone else of my acquaintance, to my knowledge. Yet Dublin is a small place where everyone knows everyone. The unarmed citizen had not yet grown accustomed to his helplessness before a loaded and cocked revolver.

It was in March that we first heard of the new police, the Black-and-Tans. We had, of course, been aware of the recruiting for the R.I.C. in England; and a young

gentleman at a Dublin dance had confided to Pamela that the R.I.C. cadetships were going to be "a jolly good thing, good pay, lots of sport, fishing, shooting, hunting."

"And being shot and hunted," she interjected prophetically.

We were coming home from, I think, a private view of Jack Yeats's pictures, where Pamela had vastly offended an English lady by referring to the Dublin streets as "dripping blood." They certainly were rather bloody in those days; but an English convert to Ireland is always unreasonable.

We saw on the posters "Murder of the Lord Mayor of Cork." While we were scanning the evening papers a distinguished official of the Government came up to us. "What is the meaning of this?" we asked. "I should say that the new recruits to the police are getting going," he answered.

We had always thought that peaceful Killiney was outside the violent operations of the I.R.A., but, following Easter, there came the burning of police-barracks all over the country, and suddenly the thing was upon us. Ballybrack Police Barracks was burned on the night of the 12th May, 1920. I append here an account of it, written at the moment, which perhaps has a vividness beyond what I might write now.

"Last night, in the long twilight, a thrush began to sing *à gorge déployée*, as Lord Edward Fitzgerald's thrushes sang at Frescati, a few miles away. The burning police-barracks had made him a rising sun.

"Last night the youngest and dearest of us was out at the theatre, and, scurrying home before the terror of the Curfew, narrowly escaped a terror closer at hand. The long daylight was not off the sky when the masked men came from everywhere, by fields and walls and ditches and roads, and held up the peaceful community.

"It was all over by 10.30. The theatre people,

arriving an hour later, waited till morning to learn what had happened.

"The youngest and dearest and her escort paused a second outside the station, electing between the shorter and steeper road and the longer and easier. They chose the latter, else they should have stumbled over the dead man who lay where the raiders had left him, to assure one that this was not a cinema performance but bitter earnest.

"The police-barracks were inhabited by the sergeant's wife and children up to last night. In such circumstances the raid is something to be looked for. A knock at the door in the dusk was answered by the sergeant's little boy. Where was his father? Away. His mother?

"The mother came. 'Very sorry to upset you,' said the polite raider, 'but I am acting under orders. You must clear out all you can in fifteen minutes.'

"She asked for twenty, and the twenty were given. The raiders helped in the removal of the furniture to a shed at a little distance. When it came to the piano there was some difficulty. Time was up and the piano had to be left.

"Meanwhile, other masked men had broken in at the back of the village shop. The manager and the book-keeper, returning after the half-holiday, were held up at the cross-roads. The housekeeper fled, only to be held up in her turn, and the nice little round-faced boy who delivers the goods fell in for the whole thrilling adventure. With a revolver cocked at his ear he pointed out where the petrol and the paraffin were stored. Still with the revolver at full cock, he was obliged to carry the combustibles, and was then returned to the shop under armed escort.

"A neighbouring straw-rick with the petrol and paraffin soon made a merry blaze. The whole work was over before eleven and the raiders were gone off again into the darkness from whence they had come.

"Next morning the neat garden of flowers and vegetables—so marked a feature of the constabulary-barracks

in an Irish village—was trampled to hard dry mud, but a couple of standard rose-trees, wilted by the fierce heat, still stood up forlornly. The walls of the barracks yet smouldered, and, looking into a window-space, one saw the twisted ironwork of what must have been a bed. But the piano, beloved of the sergeant's wife and children, lay somewhere under the débris.

"Every one was going, after Mass—it was Ascension Thursday—to stare at the ruins of the police-barracks. Groups were meeting and talking excitedly. There was a thin trail of blood along the pavement, now and again wandering into the dust of the road. Someone had not known that he bled apparently.

"Some of the raiders had been badly injured. A bomb must have exploded, for, in the basin of the village fountain lay the tips of somebody's fingers and the finger-nails. Two terribly injured boys were taken into Dublin hospitals in the trailers of commandeered motor-bikes. It was not a method of transport for the wounded one liked to think about. And these might be the softly spoken and anxiously polite shop-assistants who served you yesterday.

"The victim of the raid had nothing to do with the police-barracks. He was a gardener at one of the big houses of the neighbourhood, and he had refused to halt when he was bidden to; so, with the strange new ruthlessness, which was so oddly missing from the old Irish warfare, he was shot dead; or perhaps it was only that somebody's revolver went off by accident.

"It was all strangely unbelievable. Only for the groups and the burnt barracks one might have believed it a tale.

"There was the Sergeant going along in the old friendly way, the centre of excited comment. There was a couple of terribly obvious detectives with large pencils and feet. Nothing of Sherlock Holmes there!

"(N.B.—I believe they were Pressmen. Perhaps their feet were not large.)

"It is hard on the people who came to this exquisite

place for a quiet life, a few months ago, from the North of England or Scotland, to have that rigid figure inhabiting their garden house, and all the dreary business of the inquest."

So far goes my narrative.

That same evening an English official and his Irish wife who lived at Killiney had made an expedition to Loughlinstown, a neighbouring village, to see an old servant who was ill. They were on their way back about ten o'clock of a beautiful May evening, when they were suddenly bidden "Hands up!" Then they were politely requested to take a seat in the ditch, which, as the weather was dry and the new grass silken, was no great hardship. The lady, who is young, telling the story, could hardly tell it for chuckles and gurgles of laughter. There is always the humorous appeal in Ireland. Their captors were just little boys, she said, and they apologised for the poor accommodation the ditch provided.

"We're very sorry for inconveniencing the lady," said one, "and we hope the delay will cause as little trouble as possible."

Another offered his cigarette-case with a flowery little speech.

They were obviously new to the work, and the zeal with which they held up people and challenged figures in the dusk had diverted the lady. Someone leaped the hedge and went a little way before they rushed after him to challenge him. "Don't you know your own officer?" he asked, witheringly.

Meanwhile, the official was very much perturbed, feeling quite sure that if his identity was discovered his life would not be worth a minute's purchase. But they were not thinking of him. They were just eager, polite little boys, according to the lady's report, who might have been playing at War, so young were they, and so new to the game.

Soon after that we transferred to our beloved Shankill

and the most delicious little house—a long, low, white cottage, with a trellised porch, and an absurd little upper story, of two tiny rooms, at one end. It dated *circa* the end of the eighteenth or beginning of the nineteenth century, and belonged to a class of little old country villas about Dublin which often have a stone eagle on the long low roof, and the White Horse of Hanover in the fanlight over the front door. It had an absurd dignity. There was a carriage-sweep where three carriages might move abreast; an avenue overhung with beeches, and a lodge with a diamond-paned window. I shall never forget our joy in its discovery. We had expected little, because it alone on the house-agent's list was moderately rented, but it was in the country we loved, and cheek by jowl with the Harrels' house, so we consented to inspect it, without much hopefulness.

When the little green door in the white wall, with its heavy old knocker—a lady's hand clasping a ball—and its brass bell-pull, opened, we blinked with surprise. There was the little house, snowy-white amid the new greenery, with amenities, a lawn on which the narcissi and tulips were dancing, a little greenhouse, a beautiful old garden with a herbaceous border, a riot of colour under the apple-trees. It was the house one had dreamed of from childhood and never hoped to attain to.

It seemed wonderful that April day. Now that we are old friends it is even sweeter and more appealing. It is a lamb of a house, a dove, a child, a dear kind woman of a house. Within, it is a little shabby and faded—that becomes it. It is My Lady Poverty of St. Francis, such a lovely lady as is seldom found among the poor or the rich.

I am quite sure that none but kind and innocent people had ever lived in Sylvanmount. We have been fortunate in happening on such people and such houses. The lady who owned it might have been the spirit of the house. She was one of the ladies to whom the title of lady would be a sacred and a serious thing, something

of *noblesse oblige*. The modest rent she asked for the lamb of a house, when all the vulgar owners of vulgar houses were profiteering wildly, was a part of her high code of conduct.

"You see I don't ask very much," she said, "because it is so shabby."

Well, its shabbiness becomes it. It is a lady of a house—a lamb, a lady, like Juliet to her Nurse.

The first night we slept in the little house, or rather the first morning we waked in it, there was a row of robins sitting on the rail at the bed-foot waiting till we should wake. When we opened our eyes they piped us a song.

We could not encourage the robins, because we possessed a cat, so they asked for their accustomed crumb in vain. They will hardly know their lady when she comes back, or it will be a new generation of robins, for she has been banished nearly two years because her dog is quarantined in England and she will not come home without him.

All over the house are portraits of dogs and horses. Much of the literature the many bookshelves contain is devoted to them, or, at least, there is here every book which has a horse or a dog for its hero. Quite close to the house are the tiny gravestones of departed dogs, the little tragedies of whose deaths to their owner one can imagine.

We had got into Sylvanmount on a golden May day. There in the warmth and quiet, the green and gold, behind the high wall and the green door which might have belonged to Cranford, we waited for something very happy—the coming-home of the boys. It had been lonely being only Two and on the world. Now we were going to be Four, though we could never be Five again.

Toby had had a Summer in Cairo since the War; he had been Commandant of a camp of refugee Armenians, a camp like a little town, with a church and schools and a bazaar, at Heliopolis. He called his late flock disrespect-

fully the "Armuggy Refuggys." They had presented him with a gold cigarette-case and he had been publicly thanked by the Armenian Patriarch. There had been much feasting and ceremony, but as the account in the newspapers in my possession is written in Armenian characters I am not much the wiser. After Cairo he had been sent up to Palestine in the depth of Winter, amid ice and snow. He wanted to stay in the East, getting a civilian job if he could not get an army one, but he was not over-strong and so he came home.

Pat had been dissatisfied, as were many others, with the post-War Army. He thought he would like a job in a South American town, where he would be sniped at every morning on his way to breakfast. He had had a period of much anxious uncertainty about resigning his Commission, since he had been recommended by his Colonel for retention, but he had left it in my hands. There was much he hated giving up: on the other hand, most of his friends, with intellectual interests like his own, had gone, or were going, and the comradeship which had meant so much in the War had passed or was passing with the coming of Peace. I think many soldiers felt with him that the great qualities of the fighting days had disappeared. He had followed his gleam when he went to the War. If he had remained in Ireland it might possibly have been another gleam. Anyhow he could not go on in the Army.

His Colonel—Bonham-Carter—helped him when he saw that he was bent on going. The Colonel had been very kind. Pat had written to me to cable one word to say I approved and he would resign. So I cabled, and he cabled in return that he had sent in his resignation.

That was in February, but it was June when at last they got home, Pat coming a week in advance of Toby. Oddly enough they had met at Kantara, where many officers were held up for some six weeks, waiting for a boat.

Toby, looking up one day from his languid game of

Bridge at the Club, beheld a young officer come in. He was perfectly spick-and-span down to his gloves and his cane; everything was regulation.

"I believe it's my young brother," said Toby.

It was a long, quiet, golden Summer, so much the happier for the boys being with us. The increasing trouble in the country hardly touched us. That, as it affected the Dublin Metropolitan Police, had passed away. It was said that there had been pourparlers with the I.R.A., that the police had been promised immunity if they only acted as police. The vendetta had been against the G. men, the detectives of the Force. Up to this time the police had been armed. We were told that they walked one day into Kevin Street Barracks in force, and each man laid down his revolver. They went forth, with only their batons—civil police. Henceforth they were immune.

Up to this we were all very much in the dark as to what was happening. I don't think we had heard the name of Michael Collins that Summer. Later on it came to be so mysterious and so ominous that a good many people said that there was no such person as Michael Collins at all, that the name represented a group or an association or a syndicate. We have lived to see the Veiled Prophet unveiled and to know him as a very human and even humorous personality. It is like Stevenson's "Holy Terror," who, a sinister and shadowy figure in the background of the story, reveals himself at last as an old man clambering into a cab and crying for very weakness and pain of old age.

Not that Mr. Michael Collins has revealed himself as an old man. Far from it. The famous guerilla chief is so little like the mental pictures people had made of him that it is hardly strange that still some refuse to believe that this can be Michael Collins, the real Michael Collins. Already the man, in his full, strong prime, begins to pass into legend, like Parnell, who is traditionally alive to this day; like Lord Edward, who sleeps on the Curragh of

Kildare till the hour sounds; like many another legendary hero.

The boys had come home in khaki, and we should not have been surprised if there had been a call for their revolvers, but no one came, and the revolvers were sent away. We had a little temporary maid for part of that Summer who was a Captain of Cuman-na-Bhan, *i. e.* the Women's Auxiliary of Sinn Fein, the Nursing Corps. She was a little Madonna of a girl, softly-spoken, and with candid eyes. Pat used to say that she rang the dinner-bell like a kitten playing with it. She said that since no one could give life no one should take it. There was no doubt of her high-mindedness; and she was an excellent and most gentle servant.

One day she came to me.

"Please, ma'am, I have to attend an Executive Meeting in Dublin this afternoon. You won't be inconvenienced, for I shall detail one of my lieutenants from Bray to take my place. I shall come back as early as possible."

The lieutenant from Bray proved quite satisfactory.

The Volunteer police had begun to "function" that Summer. All the Unionists were running to them in need. The regular R.I.C. men had by this time been gathered into central barracks, all the outlying ones having been burnt. We had no protection other than the Volunteer police.

Two of Annie's brothers were Volunteers. Our apples were being taken. We mentioned the fact before Annie.

"I'll tell my brothers, ma'am," she said.

That night we were awakened by mysterious whisperings round the house. We thought it was a raid, but it was only Annie's brothers looking after the apples. We asked Annie afterwards what they did. She said: "I suppose they watch and find out who is taking them and put a stop to it."

The Volunteers were our only refuge that Summer. Everybody went to them, sometimes, I think, on trivial causes, and no one seemed to think they had not a right.

A neighbouring Colonel had a quantity of wire-netting stolen. The Volunteers traced it to an elderly brigand living by himself in the mountains. He received the first two Volunteers with a barricaded house and contumely delivered from an upper window. They went away but returned with fifty more. Then the thief humbly made confession, promised repentance, and, taking out the little ass and cart, himself delivered the stolen goods.

These Volunteers were arrested by the Military later on in the year, for doing police work when the char-à-bancs made the country hideous with drunken ruffianism. They were identified by the local R.I.C. That was one of the causes of the bitterness against the R.I.C., for the Military knew no one and so depended on them for identification; and very often they had grown up with the boys they identified, had learnt in the same school, had played together and knelt in the same church.

Sometimes the I.R.A. showed a fine sporting spirit; they did not always cease to be kindly Irish when they joined the Republican Army.

Some friends of ours had had a fortnight's shoot in another county every year for many years. Everyone knew the younger ones from the time they were children. The Captain of the local Volunteers sent the boys a message: "You can have the fortnight's shoot. After that we come for the guns." At the end of the fortnight the owners made a bolt with the guns and got them into safe keeping. But, on their way up to town afterwards, their train was raided for some reason which had nothing to do with them, and their suit-cases were opened and left on the line; some of their property disappeared and some was damaged. The mother of the party was very irate. "Two hundred pounds' worth of things have disappeared or been destroyed," she said. "I'm writing to the Captain of the Volunteers down there."

It was topsy-turvy, as things in Ireland always are. After the arms had been seized at the house of some

friends of ours, not at all kindly disposed towards Sinn Fein, a neighbouring Volunteer, who had been in the family's employment, meeting the young son one day, said, "If you was to want your rook rifle for a few hours one day, Master Fred, you just let me know."

When we got our own maids back again and Annie was free, some friends of ours in the Government Service were very anxious to have her on our report of her. "If she can't come," said the official, "can't we have the lieutenant?"

There was so little of rancour, in fact, though the wild times were becoming wilder, that one came to believe that the "Divide et Impera" policy must have been the cause of most of the internecine troubles in Ireland, and that if we were left to ourselves we should all get along happily together.

A Western priest, a dear friend of mine, who then certainly was not a Sinn Feiner, had brought the first Sinn Fein Court into the West;—at that time Republican Courts were not talked about. Agrarianism had put up its horrid head in the West, and anyone who has knowledge of what Agrarianism can be in Ireland will know that it is a thing to be dreaded. When these primitive, land-hungry people are out for land there is not much some of them will stop at. My friend wrote to me: "Things are looking much better, or at least I am not so despondent. I never passed through such a time as since the beginning of March. Now Sinn Fein has come to our rescue. Arthur Griffith is sending one of the members to adjudicate in the worst case we had to deal with. The cattle-drivers must abide by the decision of the S.F. Courts, whether they are pleased or not. The Volunteers are putting back the stock and policing the lands wherever the decision of the Courts is flouted by the drivers."

The Sinn Fein Courts killed this outbreak of Agrarianism. The justice of their decisions and the absolute impartiality greatly impressed public opinion, and drew willing testimony from men like Lord Kilmaine, who

said in the House of Lords that he had been reconciled, if not converted, to a self-governing Ireland by these Courts.

Their decisions were sometimes extremely picturesque, or so it was said. It was reported that a notorious and incorrigible wife-beater was fastened down all one night in a field where young bullocks were grazing. There were no more cases of wife-beating in that district. In the case of the cattle-drivers, at first having accepted the decision of the Courts, they disregarded them and drove the cattle again, whereupon the leaders were taken away to an unknown destination. When they came back they did not drive any more.

The ruthlessness of Sinn Fein in its police-work is all to the good. Justice has been very weak-kneed in Ireland;—scandal was averted by covering up vice, and a foolish "good-nature" saved the villain's skin. I love the young ruthlessness of Sinn Fein. No more will the man who assaults women and young children get off with a fine or a quite inadequate sentence in the police-courts. I was told the other day that this kind of crime is being specially dealt with by Sinn Fein, and, if so, woe to the miscreants, for these rigidly virtuous young men would have no pity. I have heard of some youths who were said to have been house-breaking and highway-robbing in the name of Sinn Fein. They were taken away to an unknown destination. When they returned their lips were sealed as to what had happened; but one of them said that they would much rather the Black-and-Tans had them.

There was a most amazing story in the public press some months ago of a gang of garrotters captured by the Sinn Fein police and tried by a Sinn Fein Court in Dublin. The sentences were enormous, but were well deserved. Crime as a profession has been singularly absent from Ireland, else the country could never have got along so happily with a police force which was incapable of policing. The R.I.C. is a military body:

it was Tom Kettle, I think, who called it the Army of No Occupation in Ireland. The old R.I.C. was vastly pleasant. They were good to look at. It was a characteristically Irish body. Its occupations were to keep the police-barracks clean and white, and its garden full of flowers: to nurse the Sergeant's baby and peel the potatoes for the Sergeant's wife, sitting in the sun outside the barrack-door.

Now, after the War and two years of Revolution, during which Ireland has gone unpoliced, a criminal class has sprung up in Ireland. It is a small class, else seeing that we civilians have been "Hands up" for the last two years there would be nothing of us left.

Sinn Fein may be trusted to deal with the mean crime of using the moment of the country's suffering and helplessness to cover the criminality of the man who would have been too great a coward to be a criminal if the hands of the community had not been tied.

CHAPTER XIX

SCOTLAND AGAIN

LIFE that Summer, except for the Curfew, went on much as usual. The Curfew then was from midnight till 5 a.m. The Dublin lights went out at 11.30, and at midnight the military took over the streets. It would have been rather a terror to the novice to find him- or herself, especially *her*self, in Dublin when the lights went out. I was unaware of the terror myself, except on an occasion earlier in the year when there was a public dinner to Sir Horace Plunkett, which was a somewhat dismal function, to me, at least, partly because the speakers waxed funereally merry over that report of Sir Horace's death, but mainly because of my terror of being caught by the Curfew. That dinner had its humours. There was an ancient Irish Chieftain walking about in a black velvet Court suit, carrying a large bunch of daffodils, for no purpose that anyone could discover, and there was a gentleman who was prepared to smash any sentiments distasteful to him on the part of the speakers, with an empty champagne bottle, or so it was reported; there was a fearful interest in watching him while the unconscious speakers poured forth their eloquence, which might at any moment be ended. Sir Horace looked tired and sad. Perhaps it was those funereal jests. Anyhow, the big empty station, with its few glimmering lights, was a most welcome refuge from the terrors and glooms of the evening. Very often the careless ones were caught, and the list of Curfew cases in the police courts every morning swelled as people learnt contempt for the Curfew by familiarity.

At Killiney our garden was in the Curfew district, but our house, being in the jurisdiction of the Bray police, was outside it. The short-cut lane was out of Curfew: the little road in. Fortunately the house where we played bridge every Sunday night that first Winter of the Curfew was only a few steps from our road. The military were supposed to patrol the district in Curfew hours as far as our road. We used to put our heads outside our friends' gates—listen, and then run for it. When we went home at midnight up the little road we never heard anything but the sound of our own footsteps. I think the military cannot very often have come as far as Killiney.

People found abroad in Curfew hours were picked up and taken in a tank to the barracks or the police station. It was said that these captures sometimes led to social relations, as it was said that the Black and Tans, or at least the Auxiliary Police, very often raided houses likely to be friendly in the hope of being asked to tea. Of course, they had rather a thin time in the way of social life.

The dances went on much the same during the first Curfew Winter, and the following Summer—only they were all-night dances. It was not so serious a matter when the Curfew began at midnight. Later on it was at nine o'clock, which was really uncomfortable. But the bloody Winter of 1920–21 was yet in the womb of the future. Still the motors, the Strike being settled, ran about the country roads and people were abroad till midnight, so that apart from the happenings in Dublin and the country, there was nothing to daunt one's heart. There was still life up to midnight.

In August we went to Scotland, going by Belfast, as there was a Strike on the more direct lines. Belfast we loathed. We were turned away from the boat into the wet streets till the boat should be ready. We found shelter for three hours in a hostelry, where we paid exorbitantly for a scratch meal—but then we had the

society of the waiter for all that time—there didn't seem to be much doing—and it was worth it. We heard a great many stories about the notables of Belfast which would be interesting if one could reproduce them. He was a Catholic and a Nationalist, although he had to be very sure before he let us know. He had been non-committal at first.

When we returned to the boat we had less cause than ever to be pleased with Belfast. We found a singularly unpropitiatory staff, and having been chivied from pillar to post, given berths in a four-berthed cabin where was not cubic breathing space for one person, and told that if it didn't please us we could take the air on deck, we decided to follow that suggestion.

We had returned our cabin tickets to the chief steward with the information that we should not use them, and had settled ourselves on deck for the night. It was fortunately a fine night after the rain. Riots were in full swing in Belfast, and as we slipped down the river it was easy to know that we were near a National quarter by the songs that rose above the hoarse shouting; and it was the same with the Orange quarter. We passed the Queen's Island, with all the ghostly half-built great vessels showing against the sky, and the long avenues of the shipbuilding yards stretching along silently in the electric light. I occupied myself by planning exactly what I should say about the chief steward and the stewardess and the other officials in the article I was going to write, and it was quite amusing in anticipation.

We had been about an hour out when the chief steward appeared—or could it have been he who was so short with us? I have seldom seen any creature so ingratiating. He came all one wriggle.

"May I ask," he said, "if I have the pleasure of speaking to the two ladies who were not satisfied with their cabin?"

We acknowledged that we were those two ladies.

"I believe I can do much better for you now," he

said, rubbing his two hands softly together and smiling upon us.

"Have you got a double-berthed cabin?"

"Just come and see!"

We were bewildered at this amazing change. Softly and sweetly he guided my footsteps down the stairs, and stood by benevolently, while the stewardess, also beaming upon us, led us to a two-berthed cabin.

"You will see that the ladies have tea or anything else they wish for," he said.

"Indeed I'll be delighted," responded the lady, who had driven us an hour earlier to a night on deck.

The next morning the steward came with tender inquiries as to how we had slept. On learning that Pamela had felt the motion of the boat he said with a gurgling tenderness, "Silly child!" and then proceeded to ask minutely after "Mamma's" health and comfort.

It was very strange, this change of front. We went carefully into the mystery afterwards and decided that our luggage—there were few passengers with luggage, and ours stood in the public eye—bearing the address of Hopetoun House, which is known generally to seafaring men, since it lies opposite Rosyth, had deceived them as to our social pretensions.

Let me add that we found the boat-staff on the return journey very amiable. They were Scotch.

As we went up in the tram to Glasgow, the dawn lightening and brightening, we met a fellow-countryman. He came in with two other working-men, who were taciturn after their kind. He still had a rosy cheek and very blue eyes despite the smoke of Glasgow and the years he must have spent in it, for he was not a young man. He was very friendly from the beginning, while his mates sat tight and said nothing—and very soon he was on to politics. He had not talked long before we detected his nationality, not from what he said, because he was talking from the Labour point of view, but because of his keenness.

"You are Irish," I said.

"Aye, I'm Irish. An' yerself, ma'am?"

"Irish too."

We leant forward and we shook hands solemnly under the eyes of the Scots. Then he was on to Ireland.

"Maybe you know Collooney in Sligo?"

"Yes: I know it."

"It was there that O'Conor, King of Ireland, met Henry II. of England, and that's how the trouble began."

My history was not equal to his. I did not remember that meeting.

"I've a book in my place I do be readin'," he said. "It's a grand book, the story of Hugh O'Neill, Prince of Tyrone and Earl of Ulster, and Red Hugh O'Donnell, Earl of Tyrconnell. And there was Donal O'Neill that Queen Elizabeth was so took with that he might have had her for the askin'."

So those were the dreams with which the dingy life in Glasgow was shot through as with the colours of the rainbow! He mouthed the great names as though they were music in his ears, and rolled them on his tongue as though they were of sweet savour.

Tyrone and Tyrconnell brought him to a great Irishman of modern days who derived from the North, Lord Russell of Killowen.

"That was a great man, but a very humble one," he said, using "humble" in the Irish sense of simple or unassuming.

"A journalist chap once told me that he had to see him early in the mornin' about somethin' or other, an' he found him makin' a cup of cocoa for himself over a spirit lamp because he wouldn't have the girls called too early,"—"girls" being the simple Irish equivalent of maids. How on earth had he come to be communing with a journalist chap about Lord Russell of Killowen?

Next he was talking about Glasgow with a naïve town-pride. "Glasgow is a great town—a great town. *One million inhabitants* and *three hundred thousand of*

them Irish! As many as the whole city of Dublin." He had the same air of vision about Glasgow as he had when he talked about the Princes. He might have seen an endless procession of men.

His mates had wakened up and listened to him with simple admiration. Again he was expounding the cause of Labour and laying out very gently the little woman in the corner who spoke up for the Capitalists.

"That man's a Sin Finer," she said, when he had left us, with another handshake; and very probably he was, but we had not touched on Irish politics.

At Glasgow we noticed two nuns who had been on the boat with us, who apparently had no idea of breakfast for themselves, since they had settled down on one of the hard station seats to wait for their train, which was ours, and did not start for nearly two hours. We persuaded them to have some breakfast after the uncomfortable night-crossing and the cold early morning journey. We thought the Station Hotel at Glasgow a most delicious place, with its warmth and plenty, and its glorious washing arrangements.

The nuns would have only tea and bread-and-butter: it was difficult to persuade them to that; but they laughed over Pam's magnificent breakfast, and I think enjoyed it almost as much as though they had eaten it. They were two of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion, whose Convent had been wrecked the preceding week by an Orange mob in Belfast. The Convent had since been guarded by a detachment of a Highland regiment, of which, officers and men, the nuns spoke in terms of the highest praise. The detachment had eight machine-guns trained on the street. The front of the Convent had been burnt out, and the catastrophe would have been much greater if the inhabitants of a crowded little lane at the back of the Convent had not turned out and kept back the incendiaries. The nuns said that the officers of the Highland regiment had expressed their amazement at the bigotry which could have caused such an outrage.

These Sisters of the Cross and Passion, besides their Schools for the very poor children, also ran Clubs for the girls employed in the mills and factories of Belfast, without distinction of religion. Probably that lack of distinction may have lain at the root of this attempt to burn the Convent—with the nuns inside. They were on their way to another Convent of their congregation which did the same kind of work in a Lanarkshire mining district among the children and the girls and women of the miners' families. Oddly enough, the mines were those over which our host-to-be held the surface rights.

We did not think then that we should not be again at Hopetoun. We had known that the weight of taxation was pressing heavily on Lord Linlithgow. He had been paying something like fourteen-and-six in the pound in 1919, and the taxation was increased 25 per cent. later. But he carried his burden with a characteristic gaiety and courage, though he had moments in which it was not easy to recognise the Spirit of Laughter who had made our last summer at Brookhill so gay.

He had been Colonel of the Royal Scots and O.C. troops. The subalterns adored him; he was so much of a man and a brother. A delicate man despite—or perhaps because of—his 6 ft. 4 of height, he had gone to France with his territorial regiment and, when he might have gained exemption because of physical delicacy, he remained with his men till three months after the Armistice.

During that happy time at Brookhill he was incessantly busy. He was the leading and ruling spirit in all the games and sports. If he was not playing tennis or rolling the tennis lawn, he was cutting up a tree which had fallen in front of the house. He had been very much interested in finding himself a member of a household in which the chief interests were literary and political, and, at first, he would sit up into the small hours talking, pleading with me to stay when I wanted to retire, till he consented to give up these late séances, as well as his tree-cutting,

on my representation that neither was good for his health. He has a certain sweet reasonableness which is an endearing quality in him.

Every morning he used to go off to the Camp after breakfast. Sometimes there was a lecture or an inspection, or a court-martial. The dogs were very fond of him. Finn, the Irish terrier, was a true soldier's dog. Having breakfasted with the Artillery, or the Royal Scots, or the K.O.S.B., he would stroll back to Brookhill in time to accompany the C.O. to the Camp. Once, when Lord Linlithgow was lecturing, Finn sat on his haunches and emitted a most prodigious yawn. Of course, the audience was convulsed. "If you were only half as much bored as I was, old chap!" was the C.O.'s comment. In the same way Finn used to follow the Generals about at an inspection, obviously desperately bored, and only cheering up when he thought there was any probability of the thing coming to an end.

Long afterwards the C.O. would recall how Brian, a very shy and attractive little sable Pom, slow to make friends, who had been won to affection by this dear guest of the house, used to make a great show of accompanying him and Finn to the Camp. Brian is a talking dog, and according to the C.O. he would assure him every morning that he really *was* going this time, that it was the one thing in life he desired most ardently. He would go off, barking with joyous excitement, but at the point where one crossed a stile from Brookhill into the road, Brian would invariably turn tail and run for home.

The C.O. knows the inside of a dog with anyone. When Ellen came to fetch Brian at night he had always to talk to everyone before he went. I can see now across the hearth, where there were glorious fires even in the summer weather, Brian held up in Lord Linlithgow's arms, against his face, talking.

I have said earlier that I could not write of Lord Linlithgow as I wished, but now that he has made a little stir by shutting up Hopetoun, I may follow up that publicity

by a few words about a most interesting and charming personality.

He came to Ireland at a very difficult time. It was known that German vessels had sailed laden with arms and ammunition, and that they might be expected to land on the entirely unprotected West Coast of Ireland. Hence the hurried movement of troops to Ireland. Soon after their arrival came the threat of conscription, so soon indeed that the presence of the troops was associated with it. But the suspicion and gloom with which their first coming was regarded passed away. It was a Summer of peace and good-will.

One looks back on that Summer now as a shining and happy time, before all the trouble came. The C.O., as a member of the household at Brookhill, revealed the Irish side of his character. His mother was a De Moleyns, a daughter of Lord Ventry: and the Anglo-Irish strain which is responsible for the legend of wild irresponsibility in the Irish, revealed itself in him by all manner of delicious pranks and freaks. He kept everyone perpetually laughing. On the tennis lawn the young subalterns spent much of the time doubled up with shy laughter. He was always a man and a brother with them, deeply interested in the character and doings of even the least likely of them.

His jests—well, he had a way of making some audacious and entirely unexpected remark as he went out of the room, turning back to glance over his shoulder before the door closed, or as he stood drumming on the window-pane with his back to the room. There would be silence for a second—the joke was so deliciously unexpected—then the laughter pealed. With his cousins, the Saundersons, in the North of Ireland, he had had some wildly freakish adventures. Once, while he was with us, he was in Dublin for a few days, and with Edwin Saunderson, who was then Lord French's Private Secretary, he went into a Dublin crowd, where he must have been very conspicuous by his height, to hear De Valera speaking

from the window of the temporary offices of Sinn Fein in Westmorland Street. There was a little girl close to him who was in imminent danger of suffocation in the crowd. He offered to lift her up on his shoulder so that she might see and hear. "Is it me," she said disdainfully, "to have anything to do with a soldier?" "You might do worse," he replied.

The Irish side of him must have been glad to be in play. When he addressed Ellen as "Ellen, ye divil," bawling down the kitchen stairs for his lunch, perhaps his English and Scottish friends would hardly have recognised him. He enjoyed cooking his own breakfast, and did it very well, when all the Papistical household was at Mass on Sunday mornings; and he had no objection to cooking someone else's while he was about it.

He had an uncanny way of knowing what you were thinking of. Indeed it was not altogether comfortable to think of something and look up to find him watching you, if you were not prepared to talk about the thing you had thought of. Over and over again he revealed this curious power of reading one's thoughts.

With his gaiety he was very kind and sympathetic. No one was outside his interest, certainly no woman, old or young: he was never bored with anyone, and he was always ready to entertain a dull circle and get everyone to doing the thing at which they were best.

I recall all these things at this moment, when with characteristic courage and cheerfulness he has cut his way through his difficulties. Perhaps his freedom from his great house and all that it stood for, might be the way for him to use his remarkable gifts in a wider sphere. Such wit, gaiety, courage, sympathy and real knowledge of humanity and its needs, are much needed in this broken world.

I recall him at Hopetoun, when we arrived for our last visit. We came just before lunch, and Lady Linlithgow being absent he himself took us to our rooms without

any intervention of a servant. Coming down rather late to lunch we found him waiting for us in the hall, with the two-months-old baby in his arms to be proudly displayed to us. During that visit he was constantly appearing with the young baby fetched from the nursery, a most piquant contrast between his great height and the little bundle of white. The most domesticated of men, entirely devoted to his beautiful wife and children, the wrench of giving up Hopetoun must have been tragic; and he would feel everyone's pain as well as his own.

I must give here, as an instance of his quickness, his retort, at a miners' meeting which he was addressing, to a very big and ugly miner who was bent on heckling him.

"Whaur did ye get yer blinkin' land, Hopetoun?"

"Same as you got your blinkin' face—from Daddy."

It hardly need be explained that "blinkin'" is only a substitute, and equally I need not say that the meeting was delighted with the ready retort.

I only heard him say once that he did not like a woman. She was a smart Society lady, who had an opinion on all things she knew nothing about. He asked her all through a dinner-party *why* she thought so after any expression of opinion. At the end she told him that he was vulgar without being amusing.

When we stayed at Hopetoun he, in common with other hosts who were not of our religion, sent word to the priest at the humble little Catholic Church that we should be present at Mass on Sunday. It was part of his thoughtfulness for us. I remember a local magnate in the West of Ireland doing this with a local priest, who replied, "There'll be plenty of room for Lord —— with the other people." I suppose it is a different way of regarding one's pastor. It always seemed to me in Scotland that the pastor was an appanage of the Great House. Of course the clergy of other Churches claim no such tremendous office as the Catholic priests.

There was a Presbyterian—Church, should I say?—

in the Park at Hopetoun. I did not see the interior, but I understood that there was an immense family pew, off which there was a room to which the family retired to lunch in an interval in the long service. There was a day when the preacher, being in great vein, cried out, "My brethren, the wairld is fu' o' blasted hopes!" at which the pew was convulsed—the family name being Hope.

I said to Lord Linlithgow one day, "Is God an appanage of the Hopes, or are the Hopes an appanage of God?"

He said, "A little of both." Yet he is truly, unexpectedly religious. One evening at Claremorris, after he had left us and was at Ballinrobe, but had returned to stay a night, there being a dispute over something in the Bible, he immediately produced one from the bag he had brought for the night, so that it was obvious that he travelled with his Bible.

One of those days, during that last visit to Hopetoun, we went to tea with some very pleasant neighbours. Pamela and I went alone. The lady and her daughter practised occultism, and I had heard the young people at Hopetoun talking about their horoscopes, and the crystal and all the rest of the occult properties. It was something our host did not approve. He disliked anything of superstition or the border-world. The lady was beautiful to look at, like her daughter's not very elder sister, so that her occult powers had not harmed her looks. Perhaps, indeed, she had discovered the Elixir Vitæ by means of her occultism.

I had no intention of taking part in any occult practices, but very soon our hostess informed us that her daughter had been forbidden to use the crystal because it was affecting her nerves. There was a third guest, a man who had come from London in a huge motor-car, a business man, I understood, and, judging by the motor, a very successful one.

After tea Pamela went away with the other girl, and

I sat in the beautiful garden, a mass of delicious flowers in bloom, with the hostess and the London visitor.

I listened in amazement to their conversation. It was all about crystal-gazing, reading the hand and the cards, and such things. They discussed various well-known mediums. "I always go to Madame So-and-So in B—— Street," said the business man, "I am perfectly satisfied with her. All the Stock Exchange men go to her. The Air Force go to —— and the Naval men to ——"

"Do you mean to say," I asked, "that you consult a medium about your business?"

"I never take any important step without consulting her," he replied.

He went on then to express regret that the daughter of the house had been forbidden the crystal—she was so remarkably psychic, more so even than her mother.

"Well, you see," said the mother, "it was simply sapping her strength. A dreadful thing had happened. After she had been forbidden the crystal, Lionel —— came to see us. He had been such a great friend of ours when he was at Rosyth. One of his dearest friends had passed over, and he was craving some word of him to know he was happy, and though she did not want to, and held out for a long time, she consented at last to get into communication with Lionel's friend. But when she looked in the crystal she saw something so terrible and evil, for it was a wicked spirit who had answered her call, that she was overcome with horror, and flung down the crystal almost fainting, and she would not tell what she had seen. That evening she and I were upstairs together, when she suddenly cried out that the evil spirit was present. I said, 'Say the words that will banish him,' but she could not speak; and I was in agonies lest he should take possession of her; so at last I said the words myself, and he went. But she must not look in the crystal again."

When Lord Linlithgow was with us a letter came to me concerning some permission for an anthology from Lady Clementina Waring. She wrote, "Give my love to your

most delightful guest." He certainly was a most delightful guest.

In an Irish debate in the House of Lords in November, 1920, he said :

" I hold that the Irish people have given to the common stock of British ideas and culture precious values of piety, of art, and, as has been demonstrated to us to night, of humour."

In the Hansard which he sent to me reporting the debate he had written in the margin against that sentence :

" H. H., K. T. H. and P. H. with the C.O.'s love."

From Hopetoun we went on to the House of Cromar on Deeside, the charming modern home which Lord and Lady Aberdeen had built for themselves in 1905. Cromar is a delicious place. I am afraid I prefer the freshness and brightness and unghostliness of a modern house to the beautiful old haunted houses, with the dead hand upon them everywhere. I suppose the ideal thing is an old house carefully modernised so as not to spoil its ancient beauties ; but would that keep out ghosts ?

I have stayed in a good many houses supposed to be haunted. Of one house which I have visited, but never stayed in, the hostess says cheerfully : " We have three ghosts, so you can take your choice. There is the Clammy Hand, which is felt but not seen. You may wake at night to its touch. There is the gentleman in blue velvet. It is really true that one of our guests met him on the stairs one morning as she came down to breakfast and remarked as she came in, " What a very picturesque footman you have ! " The third is an old lady—a great-great-aunt of my husband—who steals about in the twilight, looking for something."

I certainly should not have picked the Clammy Hand of those three ghosts.

But in our visitings we have had one experience, not at all a terrible one, for which we have no explanation. We had arrived at a house, very tired after a long journey,

and "in the pink" as to nerves and health, for we had been holidaying for some time. Our rooms were oak-panelled and tapestried, which made them very dark, and there was the usual four-poster bed in the principal room of the suite, belonging at latest to the eighteenth century, its pillars very tall and slender, its curtains and coverlet decorated with the beautiful embroidery of the eighteenth-century ladies. In that room there were eleven electric lights, but when they were all switched on they only made the room appreciably darker. The first night I fell asleep with the thoroughness of healthy fatigue, only thinking to myself lazily before I slept that the tapestried wall on which my sleepy eyes rested was certainly very dark.

I had left an electric light on beside my bed, in the shadow of the curtains. I awoke to find it out, or I dreamt I did, and switched it on again. I certainly awoke later and found the light out. This time I felt almost too alarmed to stir. While I hesitated, with a quaking heart, somewhere in the house was a violent noise, as though a window had fallen, and, immediately following, the clock in the stable-yard struck two.

I was never very happy in that room, though it was a beautiful room, nor was Pamela in her room adjoining. I did not like even writing there by daylight, and found myself looking over my shoulder when I forced myself to do it.

We asked one day at the luncheon-table if there was a ghost, and our host said No: part of the house dated from the fourteenth century, so it could hardly escape a ghost. Our hostess said: "There is something like a ghost in the Peacock Room, or at least something very odd happens there. The bed goes up and down with you in the middle of the night."

The men present laughed, but she persisted.

"Oh, but I felt it when I stayed here before I was married. You know"—to our host—"that we had to give up using that room because so many people felt it."

Later on we asked another guest where the Peacock Room was situated. He answered vaguely that it was over there, waving his hand in a direction where our rooms were not.

Across the corridor from us there was the open door of a room in which we could see our trunks. One day one of us had occasion to find something which had not been unpacked. Lo and behold, it was the Peacock Room!—wonderfully embroidered peacocks on the curtains, the coverlet, and the chair covers, peacocks flaunting themselves on the carpet, peacocks in the beautiful old tiles of the grate. The room was entirely dismantled and out of use, though the beautiful furniture of buhl and ormolu remained. Its only use for the moment was to receive the empty trunks of the occupants of the opposite suite.

We went there a year later. Our host said to us: "We could not give you the rooms you had last year as they are occupied."

We were shown to our rooms. As soon as we were left alone there we turned and looked at each other. We had the Peacock Room.

Oddly enough, we were not at all frightened there, though we had come much less physically fit than the year before. But all the same I would not sleep alone, so Pamela shared the spacious couch. She was awakened the first night, somewhere about the middle of the night, by a gentle swaying movement of the bed which lasted for some minutes. She did not feel at all frightened. She considered whether she should awaken me, but decided not to and went asleep. She said nothing about it the next day, fearing I should be frightened; but two or three nights later I awakened to the very same gentle swaying of the solid four-poster bed. One might have been in a hammock being swung very gently to and fro. I only felt a vague interest as to how long the motion would last. When it ceased I went asleep like a lamb.

I spent some of the morning hours in the Peacock Room at my daily work after that experience; but it never occurred to me to look over my shoulder. I feel sure that if "anything had happened," it was in the Tapestry Room, not the Peacock.

As this book is nothing if not discursive I shall interpolate here an experience of my old friend Lady Gilbert, who was a sister of Lady Russell of Killowen. The Russells had taken a big, very well-known house in the North of Ireland for a summer and Lady Gilbert—Rosa Mulholland she was then—went to stay with them. There was one wing locked and out of use, and, as it happened, her bedroom adjoined the locked wing. It was Midsummer, or not much later, when she went there. One morning she awoke feeling that it was very early though the morning light was in the room. She had been awakened by a tremendous noise in the house, as though heavy furniture was being moved roughly from place to place, and now and again something fell with a terrific crash. While she listened, only half-awake, she heard a clock strike four strokes. She said to herself sleepily that the servants must be turning out some rooms, and that they had begun very early, and went asleep again. On mentioning the matter at the breakfast-table she was assured that she had only dreamt the noise, and she did not dispute it, concluding in her own mind that something must have been going on, but attaching no importance to it. She had not the least idea that the house was well known as a haunted house.

She came back for a second visit in October, before the family left, and again she had the same experience, but in a more terrifying form. She awoke in pitch darkness to the tremendous crashing sounds, but this time there was no possibility of mistaking the noise for anything of human agency. She described the noise, as nearly as she could get to it, as though giants were dragging huge forest trees over mountains and hurling them to the plain.

Suddenly she realised that the noise was in the locked wing, almost at her ear, just the dividing wall between. Again the clock struck four: and she said her whole existence seemed to pass out of the range of warm human things and to stand shivering and terrified in a greater fear and desolation than she could ever describe.

She fled to a sister's room, and was told that the servants had already taken fright at the noises in the house and that some had left, so she held her peace. She even occupied the room for the duration of her visit. She did not hear the noise again. She said if she had she should have gone mad.

At the House of Cromar there were no ghosts. The house had the feeling of a good house where God is loved and served. It is built, as so many houses in Scotland are built, in the manner of a French château, with tourelles at the four corners. Is it a relic of the old connection between France and Scotland?

My bedroom opened into one of the tourelles. It was one of a suite of three delicious rooms, a sitting-room dividing two bedrooms, its own special bathroom opposite. There was not a shadow in the house, not a fleck of dust, not a cobweb. Above the entrance door was cut in the lintel:

"Vnless ye Lorde bvilde ye Howse they labour in vaine that bvild yt."

The feeling of that verse was over the house. While I slept at night the song of the fountain was in my ears. Below my windows in the oriel of the tourelle lay a beautiful Italian garden. The house stands on a plateau, and one descends by terraces to the level ground. The fountain, falling from a pitcher held by a beautiful boy in stone, into a basin of green and gold mosaic, begins at the head of the garden. It runs through an aqueduct and falls again through a Triton's mouth to a stone basin, so that the garden has two fountains. It reappears in the Roman wall of the garden, and at the foot of the

second terrace you see the last of it pouring from an open mouth like the Cloaca Maxima, only pure crystal, after which it becomes a little stream that runs away through the grass out on to the moor. So there were four fountains, and a very loud sweet singing of water all through one's dreams.

The brick pillars of the pergola were wreathed in roses. The beds in the garden are heart-shaped. There is a summer-house, and seats placed in happy and sheltered nooks, and all manner of ingenuities. When you lean upon the wide wall of the terrace to look over the beautiful mountainous country you read in the stone:

"I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, whence cometh my help."

Whenever I think of Cromar I think of the song of the four fountains as it was in my ears all night, and the beautiful atmosphere of the house, where there was nothing common or unworthy, where everything was on the heights, but not too high to be warmly human and kind.

We had a most delightful fellow-guest, a Dr. Tait Mackenzie, who had been household physician to Lord and Lady Aberdeen when they were in Canada. He was a variously gifted person. He was a professor at the University of Pennsylvania. He had just had a highly successful show of his sculpture in London. He had been doing remedial and restorative surgery in the War, and had accomplished some very wonderful cures. I read some of the proofs of his book which was about to be published, with illustrations of various devices and inventions of his for restoring atrophied muscles. Here I am on dangerous ground, being a lay person, and I may say something ridiculous to the trained mind, so I shall say nothing.

Dr. Tait Mackenzie had a very charming little wife, who was an accomplished musician. She used to listen in amazement to our political discussions. The first

morning at the breakfast-table, where our hosts never appeared, it almost came to a pitched battle—the Irish Question, of course. The Professor left the breakfast-table and walked up and down the room in much agitation. He was very angry.

Later, in the seclusion of our delicious sitting-room upstairs, I said to Pamela: "Now, there's the real don! He has settled everything before you were born. If he goes on like this I shall really be obliged to tell him that I don't believe he can sculp for nuts."

That wanton insult was never delivered. A day later we were fast friends. We still wrangled, but there was exhilaration in our wranglings. He called us the Ferocious O'Flaherties, from the inscription over one of the town-gates of ancient Galway city: "From the Ferocious O'Flaherties, Good Lord deliver us!" Once I came down to breakfast a little late and heard Pam's despairing cry: "Mother, mother, they are all on to me!"

Some other guests, whose opinions usually went to the stronger side, or else they were afraid to express them, had joined the enemy in my absence. I arrived with a war-whoop and we scattered the lot.

The enemy would always sit down between the Ferocious O'Flaherties at meals, and the wrangle went on under the amused eyes of our beloved hosts. Once he said he was not afraid of us, that we had no arms. We said that we had four and would hug him to death. He said: "Only let it be lingering." His wife then said she would rescue him, and he answered: "Thank you very much, dear, but not till I am unconscious."

It will be seen that he could turn a jesting compliment with anyone. He had done some beautiful work, notably a statue of Eric Drummond, one of the brilliant band of young soldiers who fell at the very beginning of the War. He was one of the trusty congenial spirits to whom one says "Farewell and Hail," hoping to meet again.

I remember a very wet day when we all motored to a meeting of a Scottish Field Club, an institution which says very much for the love of knowledge which is to be found in the bosom of the Scot. We were to have explored a certain historic spot and to have been told all about its history, associations, and antiquities, after which we were to have had our tea in the heather and be photographed there. But the elements were entirely unkind, although we did not at all mind the streaming skies and the soaked heather; but we had to get under shelter, and so all the women packed into the little room of a cottage, where there were a good fire and an open window, and we all told stories and repeated poems till the lecturer appeared, a very good-looking young man in a kilt, with shy eyes and wild soft dark hair, very like an Irishman. His lecture was informing and brief. Meanwhile all the men-folk crowded the passage or stood outside in the rain. We had a splendid tea, the good woman of the cottage and her assistants bringing in relays of hot buttered bannocks and girdle cakes and scones. The people were of all sorts and conditions—the neighbouring gentry and the shopkeepers from the towns and the farmers, all well dressed, despite the rain, and highly intelligent.

I thought it a most delightful occasion and institution.

The good Scots people heard some Irish poetry that day and seemed to like it very much. Afterwards the intrepid ones were photographed in the drenched heather and went off gaily through the rain to the station. I should like very much to see Irish Field Clubs like that one in Scotland, of which the Lord-Lieutenant of the country, Lord Aberdeen, was president; at which met and talked people of all ranks and religions and politics and occupations, everyone friendly and happy together.

CHAPTER XX

MAINLY BELFAST

We paid a visit to Banffshire before we went home, and stayed at an old, old Highland castle, Rothiemay, belonging to the Forbeses. I had met Mrs. Forbes of Rothiemay when I went to Rome just before the War, the occasion being the Quinquennial Meeting of the International Council of Women, of which Lady Aberdeen was President.

Rothiemay was really of the Highlands. One sat down to dinner that first evening with four kilted men, whom, when I first saw them in the drawing-room, I thought to be of gigantic size, but that perhaps was an exaggeration of the kilt.

I was given Mary Stuart's Room, which had an inscription on the wall stating that she slept there on such and such a night. The walls were immensely thick and the window recesses consequently deep. The room, upholstered in scarlet damask, with a bed, which one had to ascend to by steps of scarlet and yellow, had the look of a royal apartment, and I was alone in it, Pamela sleeping in the nursery-wing at the other end of the house, and too shy of the new house and people to ask to be put near me.

Old as the house was there was electric light. I had been shown how to switch it on over my bed, but the one who instructed me had neglected to mention that the current was turned off the last thing at night, since electric light in so old a house was not regarded as altogether safe. I was saying my prayers at the midnight hour when I became aware that something was wrong

with the light. I looked up. It was a thin red filament: and suddenly it went out. I was in black darkness in this big room, with which I was perfectly unfamiliar, as we had arrived very late.

I am so unaccustomed to darkness except out-of-doors that the dark presses upon my eyeballs and against my face as though it would stifle me. For a few seconds I fairly gibbered. Then I remembered that the inexact person had said, after showing me the location of the various lights: "And here is a candlestick, and matches, by your bed."

I went groping with extended hands which I was not sure might not meet ghostly hands, and to my enormous relief I found the candlestick and matches, and made an illumination with the other candles in the room.

I must have added enormously to the Rothiemay bill for candles, for I had an illumination every night, aided and abetted by Margaret, the dear old Highland maid, who laughed at my fears, yet supplied me with candles. Waking up at night to make sure the candles were not in need of replacing did not tend to sound sleep; but as I looked round the room, with its royal red damask, I said to myself that if one had to see a ghost one could hardly see a lovelier one than Mary Stuart. Fortunately for my peace of mind I did not know that the ghost of that room was not Mary Stuart, but someone much more objectionable. However, I think she must have had some influence against the evil ghost, for I had no intimation of him, or her. One generally smells the evil thing if one is sensitive.

We motored from Rothiemay, as we had motored a week earlier from Cromar, to Dunecht, the lordly pleasure-house where Lord and Lady Cowdray gave weekly hospitality to all the countryside. The house, which had belonged to Lord Crawford of Balcarres, had suffered a sea-change to great magnificence. All the riches of East and West were gathered into its splendid halls; there was nothing that was not priceless. It was

pleasant to find Lord Cowdray art patron to that odd and brilliant artist, James Pryde, whose pictures were going up by degrees around the magnificent hall, with its overhead gallery. The artist, being detached with difficulty from his seclusion, recovered amazingly when he found other "makers" of the company, instead of undiluted "County," which danced and ate and drank and stared and listened to music every Wednesday afternoon.

As the gathering was announced in the country newspapers, "Lord and Lady Cowdray will be at home to their friends at Dunecht Wednesday afternoons," one wondered what provision was made against the swell mob who would have such a fine haul among the precious things. Perhaps some of the magnificent footmen were "'tecs" in disguise. I must say that wealth was not overpowering in the case of such simple and charming people as our hosts, whose riches, moreover, overflow on more than the County.

We were on our way to a flower-show at Huntley, to be followed by a garden-party, when the motor broke down with a crash in the engine as though a shot had been fired into it. The party immediately declared that Pam had fired a shot, for they insisted on regarding us as Sinn Feiners who carried weapons that had a habit of going off. The chauffeur, I thought, looked doubtful. He was a very elderly chauffeur, with a long white beard, which must have afforded amusement, I am sure, to the sophisticated London chauffeurs who were thronging the Highlands that August. He was a typical old family servant. Mrs. Forbes told me that she, being an Anglican, could very seldom get to her own church at Huntley. The chauffeur would say: "Ye canna gang to Huntley the day. Canna ye put up wi' Mr. Anderson?"

I was very glad that we were not at Rothiemay for a Sunday, for he would most certainly have refused to drive us to Mass. I am sure we had been a trial to the Cromar chauffeur: we thought we detected it in his back as he drove up to the gate of the Catholic Church at Aboyne,

and again when he had to retrieve us there; but he had had a double dose, for he had driven Lady Aberdeen's maid to the Anglican Church.

I remember *à propos* how Lord Aberdeen, who was always present to see his guests into the motor, no matter how early it might be, having wrapped us up carefully in the rugs, went round to perform the same office for the maid. It reminded me of the day at the Vice-Regal Lodge when the motor, having its full complement, Lord Aberdeen being one—a girl who had been unable to make up her mind as to whether she wanted to go into Dublin arrived at the last moment. Whereupon Lord Aberdeen gave up his seat and sat by the chauffeur. Not the right thing for the King's Representative, the coldly critical would say, yet I think the courtesy was kinglike.

As we went through Glasgow on the way home we saw Pat's beloved Doc.—Dr. Berkeley Robertson—and we had another example of good Scottish hospitality. Mrs. Robertson met us at the railway station, collected our luggage, and carried us off in a taxi to the big bright house in Kingsborough Gardens, so flooded with the sun that if I had been a patient stepping within that warm and happy influence I should straightway have been well again. I had a bond with Dr. Berkeley Robertson beyond Pat, for a beloved younger brother of his, who had been killed in the War, had sung my "All in the April Evening"—and the Doc. had written to me that he always recalled the song and the boy together. Pat is extravagantly fond of his Doc. I have known him to say to a young lady: "Which would you rather meet, the Doc. or A.?" naming a peculiarly fascinating young man. Of course, she might have plumped for the Doc.—after she knew him.

The high, bright house had an extraordinary good feeling. And to think that it was in Glasgow! I remembered a story of the old London days about Neil Munro and another literary Scotsman, who, having been well entertained in Paris, said to the distinguished

Frenchman who was seeing them off: "You must come and see us in Glasgow." Whereupon the story ran that the distinguished Frenchman gurgled, choked, apologised in one breath, murmuring: "But Glasgow! Mon Dieu! I would as soon visit you, mes amis, in—Hell."

Well, Glasgow is a happy memory to us. We liked its Station Hotel and we loved the Doc. and Mrs. Doc. and the delicious Doc. children. We had the most happy hospitality, and the quaint story-book children played about the sunny room and the Doc. sat at his organ, his head thrown back, playing for us. It was a good evening: one of the occasions when one feels a curious felicity, a gladness in being alive and having such friends. Then, when we must go, the Doc. took us in another taxi to our train and waited till the train moved out.

The next morning we were in Belfast, very late, for we had crept along through a dense fog which had necessitated the engines stopping at intervals during the night, and too late for the early train to Dublin. As soon as we landed we went in search of breakfast and a wash—we were in sad need of the latter, and indeed of the former.

We left our luggage at the station before we set out to look for a hotel. We were directed to one which we were told was the best hotel in Belfast, but that was a libel on the others. We went up a shabby staircase and into a coffee-room, where a number of people were breakfasting. We had barely looked in when an uncouth woman bundled us out with: "Ye'll wait in there till we are ready for ye." "In there" was a sort of family sitting-room, such as you might find in the West of Ireland "hotels." From the number of photographs of priests we gathered that it was a Catholic house. Well, it was Orange Catholic by its manners.

Left alone in this stuffy apartment we looked at each other. Flight was the only thing. Softly we stole out past the coffee-room door and down the stairs; but just as the street was in our sight we were captured

by the lady who had repulsed us from the coffee-room and haled back: our breakfast was ready.

I am bound to say that it was a quite good simple breakfast; but as for washing, that was another matter. We went along corridor after corridor where men were at work painting, and interviewed two or three chambermaids. No, there was no way of washing—not even our hands. We went out dirty, as we had come in.

We resumed our weary trek in search of a proper hotel. We found one, that promised well by its portal, in one of the principal thoroughfares. There was a small boy in tweeds inside the door. We were by this time incapable of much further exertion. We said to him: "We are going to lunch here; but not yet. Where is the lounge?"

We had to say it three times before he understood, but he was quite a bright, obliging boy. He led us at last to a very shabby sofa at the head of the stairs.

"But we want the lounge," we said.

"That's the only lounge there is," he answered.

He understood when we suggested the drawing-room and went off very willingly to get us papers, but, apparently, none were to be had. When we had given up hope he came triumphantly with an armful, rescued apparently from the kitchen, for they had spots of grease on them. None of them was more recent than three days back, and there was a *Daily Mail* ten days old.

At lunch we talked to the waiter.

He had a lean and a lugubrious visage. Obviously Black Care rode him hard. Outside there were little knots of people reading the Lord Mayor's proclamation to the citizens of Belfast; a military lorry passed by full of tin-hatted soldiers with munitions of war. Someone had said in our hearing that there would be trouble towards evening; it was a holiday at the Queen's Island.

The first few questions elicited nothing. A man who is not on the popular side in Belfast shuts up tight as an

oyster when you suggest opinions, unless, indeed, he expresses Socialistic opinions and ends up with the assurance that he is a Loyalist. But a sudden bitterness betrayed him. "It's not politics," he said, "it's religion: a Catholic has no right to live in Belfast."

Then it all came out. He had been employed at the Queen's Island "assisting the electricians." "I never had a quarrel with anybody," he said, "till I was set on six weeks ago and beaten. A Protestant mate warned me not to go back. I have a wife and two children. For four weeks I tramped Belfast in search of a job. Even in places where I was known and they were friendly enough there was no job for me because I was a Catholic. You see, they're afraid of trouble with the others. Some of them are liberal enough in Belfast, but they're afraid to come out into the open and speak or to employ Catholics in a time like this. At last, I got a job here."

He mentioned the wages. They were starvation wages.

"It's all the religion," he went on. "What good did it do them to set fire to the chapel the other day? And the Convent in Ballymacarret. They said it was vengeance for the murder of Mr. Smith. What had the chapel to do with it or the nuns? The nuns never did them any harm. They have what they call hostels for the Catholic mill-girls. Anyone else that wants to can come. And schools for the children. Is that any harm to anybody? D'ye see St. Mary's Hall yon? It's stored to the roof with the furniture of the Catholics who were turned out of their houses. I tell you they're making Sinn Feiners by the hundred in Belfast of men who only wanted to do their work and live in peace."

"Enforce order in Belfast!" he went on, with a quiet bitterness. "With General —— to see that it is enforced! And the men! They wouldn't do the things they do against us if they weren't set on by others that ought to know better. Employers sometimes! Sometimes foremen, men in authority. Then the men—

some of them quiet enough if they were let be, turn on us they worked with in peace and drive us out to starvation."

He gave the numbers of men out and " on the Fund," but I've forgotten. I remember what the Fund was able to give them. It was very inadequate.

" What about English Labour ? "

" They don't care about English Labour. They have Trades Unions of their own. Another thing makes it harder for us. The boycott of Belfast by the rest of Ireland has frightened the business men. They're not better inclined to give a job to a Catholic because they are frightened.

" There'll be another row to-night," he said, " three killed last time, or so they said. They're maybe burying their dead and saying nothing about it. You know how it is ? "

Yes, I knew. Alike in Dublin rebellion or Belfast riot the number of casualties is never known. The people bury their dead secretly and by night. I remembered a weird tale of the lorry-load of coffins encountered at dead of night, after Easter Week, 1916, by someone in one of the outlaying villages of County Dublin, on the way to burial in one of the many disused ancient graveyards which hide behind stone walls, the tallest gravestone buried by the rank grasses, all about the County Dublin.

I did my best to get him a job in Dublin afterwards, but I fear I did not succeed. Dublin was swamped by Belfast Catholics looking for jobs. And so he drifted away out of my knowledge.

Even at that hotel, though it was a great improvement on the last, there was no washing arrangements that we could discover. Apparently people only washed in their bedrooms, and the casual visitor was not free of these apartments.

We left Belfast dirty, but with a heart-felt thankfulness. Arrived in Dublin, and at Harcourt Street Station, on the last lap of our journey, we met Susan Mitchell

getting out of the train we were entering—Susan, looking her most beautiful, which is to say a good deal, in her most beautiful clothes. She was returning from a garden-party at Sir Horace Plunkett's, accompanied by some very smart visitors.

"Go away," we said; "we're dirty! We have just come from Belfast."

The last injury was that our wire sent from Belfast at 1.30 did not arrive till eight o'clock, and no one met us at the station. We were quite angry and bitter about the family negligence as we trudged home through the lovely evening, leaving our luggage to be fetched by a couple of Irish Volunteers. We came disgruntled up the green avenue, only to have Pat rushing out with a happy face, calling back: "They have come, Ellen, they have come!" with a wild barking of dogs. He had been alone three weeks while we made holiday. And we had been angry!

Everyone said to us when we recounted our Iliad in search of a wash: "But why didn't you go to the Midland?" But we didn't know anything about the Midland.

A big policeman at the Belfast station whom I had accosted hopefully asking: "Are you from the South?" had answered "A, awm not, thenks be till Providence."

The younger of us all through the unsuccessful quest had made the remark at intervals: "Good Lord! And these are the people who won't go under a Dublin Parliament!"

CHAPTER XXI

LETTERS

THE touch with Belfast reminds me of some letters which came to me from Belfast in the years following the publication of *The Years of the Shadow*, in which I had referred to a morning in the early days of the War when my husband and I had talked with an R.I.C. man who was guarding the viaduct at Shankill. The first letter ran :

"MADAME,

"I was very agreeably surprised to see by a recent critique that you had given me a niche in *The Years of the Shadow*. 'The R.I.C. man from the North who was guarding the viaduct' since came very near to seeing what lay beyond the great Shadow. I was wounded at Ashbourne where the C.I., D.I."—that is to say, the County and District Inspectors—"and others made the supreme sacrifice. Thank God for Peace Day, and may we soon have a real Irish Peace too. It is not, however, to write in this strain that I took up my pen; while debating with myself whether I should take the liberty of thanking you for noticing my existence, a pathetic letter from a young married brother of mine decided the matter. Full of ambition, he took up the art of training 'the young idea' in F——, a remote but romantic region of dear dark Donegal, a few years ago. Now, with the cramped outlook of a National Teacher, afflicted with a dwindling attendance, his rose-hued dreams show little sign of taking the form of reality. Curbed in his profession, he looks for other outlets for his ambition,

and asks me for a candid criticism of a short story he is finishing. I feel unequal to the task, but oh, how I should like to help him! Maybe *you* would? God grant it be so!

"Grateful in anticipation is

"H. L.

"('THE R.I.C. MAN FROM THE NORTH.')"

I wrote that I should be very pleased to read his brother's story, but more than a year had passed since that "Peace Day 1919" upon which his letter was written, before a second and longer letter reached me. This seems to be of such remarkable interest as to justify my giving it in full. The incident about the Resident Magistrate I thought very indicative of the courtesy which belongs to so many of the simple Irish. These are the true gentlemen of Ireland. It may be necessary to explain that my husband had been Resident Magistrate for South Mayo.

"DEAR MRS. HINKSON,

"I owe you a most profound apology for neglecting to thank you for your kindness to my brother and to me. When in Scaniport in August '19 you kindly consented to criticise my brother's initial effort as an author. His 'Usquebaugh' was a somewhat disappointing production. It lacked imagination. Some of it was brimful of promise, but an impossible policeman robbed it of its otherwise slender merit. I had hoped for better, and in saying so perhaps used too much emphasis. I refused to trouble you until he would turn out something more worthy of your attention. He was to make another effort. I have been awaiting it since, but in vain. My conscience is not altogether at ease. Possibly in my effort to pose as a competent critic I have been too vigorous with the blue pencil. To pass from the subject—— On my brother's behalf and my own I thank you most sincerely. I should have long since done so, but was awaiting the MS. that failed to materialise. I had omitted to give the budding

author's excuse for the weakness of his work. He has since told me that in its original form it did possess some merit, but on learning that he was to have the benefit of your criticism he rewrote it in a hurry, for the sake of cutting out his principal character—an R.M. who was credited with, I suppose, most of the vices and few of the virtues associated with his profession. Diffidence!

"Please permit me to offer my belated condolence in the loss you have sustained in the death of Mr. Hinkson. Yes, he was with you those mornings at the Viaduct. I have very pleasant memories of our exchange of views. It is natural, I suppose, to mourn the dead, but our sympathies are more surely due to those left to mourn. I am not usually pessimistic, but the bungling, and worse, of those, who, in a great measure, control our destinies, are almost enough to make one envy those for whom life's wildest storms lash in vain.

"I, too, have had sorrows since you and I exchanged greetings. Married in January '19, ours, though humble, was one of the happiest homes in this big city. In February last one short hour's illness turned all my joys to sorrow. But we must bow with what grace we may to the decrees of an all-wise Providence. Until the veil of eternity is drawn aside we can hardly hope to see much of the Wisdom of ways that are not ours. Yet I sometimes feel that I should be glad my Rose escaped the trials of these days. Most unselfish of souls, always keenly conscious of the sufferings of others, hers would have been a life of pain had she been spared to experience the depths of selfishness to which a community can fall.

"A few pars in the *Independent* from your pen indicate that you passed through our troubled city during one of its spasms. It is lucky you did not make a detailed study of us, for our ways, when we are mad, are not such as would fill with hope the breast of a social reformer. Reams have been written in efforts to convey an idea of our excesses, but they were written almost in vain. The temptation to supplement the newspaper accounts that

reached you was hard to resist, but my tales would necessarily have been but a rehash of what so many others were trying to tell. An *Irish News* I sent you will have conveyed an idea of the Roman-Catholic-militant-Nationalist-cum-Sinn-Fein perspective. The 'Loyal' press is equally eloquent on the wrongs of *their* protégés. The spectacle is not at all edifying in a community taught to preen itself on its prosperity and enlightenment. If we could only give up interest in the religion of our neighbours and study chess there might be some hope for us. 'Only pawns in the game' is a phrase that might then convey a lesson. But as political pawns we must, I suppose, be sacrificed in turn until the need for our rivalries has passed.

"A great many Catholic houses have been wrecked in the immediate vicinity of our street. About a third of our neighbours were Catholics, but few now remain. Most of them thought discretion the better part and fled when 'noticed to quit.' Several times I have received my marching orders, and I expect would have had to obey were it not that a number of police friends frequently call. To many of my Protestant neighbours a lot of credit is due. They were opposed to any of the Catholics 'getting the wind up,' as fleeing from the terrors of mob-law is expressively put. Some of them even risked having their houses wrecked by refusing to display the Union Jack. One of them remarked to me that his flag was going out no more until it had ceased to be a party rag. Next street to us is badly smashed. On my way to Mass I pass a lamp-post surmounted by the loyal emblem; from the crossbar swings an oil-painting of William III., his sword pointed to the scene of loot and wreckage a few feet away, while on the wall of what is left of the home is a fine picture of Sir Edward, serenely surveying, as it were, the results of what most folks consider his handiwork. To fix the blame though is beyond my compass. I've always heard it takes at least two to make a quarrel.

"You will have observed that a big lot of capital is

made by the apologists for the pogrom out of the fact that a number of anti-conscription Southerners had work in the Ship-yards. Thereby hangs a long, long tale. In such Works there is naturally a lot of controversy. With such material it naturally drifted into the political groove. Now the average Munster man is easily a match for the more slow-minded Northern man, even when he has a bad case, but with the logic of facts in his favour, the Southerner literally walked round his opponent. That was a matter of daily occurrence in the workshops. The doughty Belfast warriors felt duly hurt at being made to look so limp in the wordy wars, so that they nursed their grievances while awaiting other means of rehabilitating themselves in the good graces of their admirers. At the Trades Union meetings fuel was added to the fire. A lot of Scottish munition-workers, mostly of Irish extraction, allied themselves with the Southerners. The leaders of local Trades Unionism were freely twitted with taking their 'orders' from the Orange Hall. Resentment grew. Sinn Fein activities provided fresh barbs for sarcastic Southern arrows. 'It is not us but you who will have to go this time,' was a popular gibe at the loyalist of Carson brand. Then the damned—pardon the spelling—resentment burst, and the world knows with what a fury. Like the dogs in the fable Tray had to share the fate of Snap.

"I have had the pleasure of reading your *Years of the Shadow*. With such an entertaining guide it was indeed a pleasure to me to renew acquaintance with so many places and people of whom I have very pleasant recollections. I could just see Sergt. Boyle as he rubbed his chin while seeking a way out of the difficulty in which he found himself over the problem of your 'hins.'

"Your hope that my Ashbourne experience has not embittered me is more than realised. I can hardly boast of happy memories of that sad day, but must confess to a feeling akin to admiration for the leadership of Tom Ashe. As was said of the Boyne, had we swapped leaders the

results might have been different. When, at the end of five long hours, the fortunes of the day finally wavered in favour of the rebels, it was the rebel doctor who saw to the wounded police, and it was on T. A.'s orders that the few uninjured police set to work to alleviate the sufferings of their less fortunate comrades. Coming up to Mr. Gray, C.I., who, mortally wounded, was beside me in a motor, Tom Ashe very courteously introduced himself, sympathised with the C.I., stood by to see him attended to by Dr. Hayes; then, as the discussion of the day's doings looked like being a rather one-sided one, he congratulated the C.I. on the courage and conduct of his men and passed on. I well remember his parting words: 'It was a fine clean fight and no unmilitary act performed on either side.'

"A few personal notes and I conclude. Since Jan. '17 I've been a sorting clerk in the G.P.O., but now, as I'm only a temporary man, have got to accept work as a postman, or quit. With a shattered knee I'm hardly adapted for postman's duties, but one must live. I have applied for a position under the unemployed scheme about to be inaugurated. The Insp.-Gen., Mr. Smith, has very kindly written asking the Minister of Labour to give my case special consideration. I hope he may, but there will be a plethora of applicants. Micawber-like, however, I still keep on hoping that something will turn up.

"With apologies for victimising you with my musings,

"I am, sincerely yours,

"THE R.I.C. MAN FROM THE NORTH."

My correspondence has always been a very great interest in my life. All sorts and conditions of people write to me from time to time and from many countries. I only wish I had the letters Sergeant Dunphy wrote to me from Tidworth Camp in 1918, but, during these Wander-Years, they are inaccessible, with my other belongings "stored" out of my reach.

My *Star* articles have brought me much strange corre-

spondence, pleasant and unpleasant. I used to meditate writing an article on the subject in the *Star* and calling it "Star Shells." There was a gentleman who used to abuse me roundly for what he called my elaborate camouflage of Sinn Fein. Incidentally he used to pour the vials of his wrath on the Chruch to which I have the honour to belong. He said he knew, because so many of his relatives were, like me, "priest-ridden slaves." When he had left nothing more to be said he used to finish up—

"Sorry! Yours, HUGH BLANK."

I might be pardoned for not believing that he was sorry.

Sometimes I have received letters of appalling violence. One, which bore a London post-mark, was signed "An Irish Bank Manager." It was truly a terrifying epistle, so much hatred was in it for the country that presumably bore the writer and for what he conceived to be my sympathies. The other day I received another such vitriolic letter, the occasion being my defence in *The Times* of my beloved Aberdeens, against an anonymous and irresponsible gossip. The fury was for me, I am glad to say, not for them. I am case-hardened, but a young soldier who had suffered in the War, being more sensitive than most, to whom I handed the letter, was terribly upset. He implored me to destroy it; he could not bear to think that such hatred existed in the world.

There are many pleasanter things than those asperities. There is the Danish poet who addresses me on post-cards, "My dear Congenial,"—and writes in a mixture of languages. "Soldat pendant two years, en defense of the shores of Dannemarck," and ends up with "Your truly Danish Friend."

There was the letter evoked by some criticism of mine in the *Daily Mail* of masculine manners in the Tube. It came from an English sea-side hotel, or, at least, it was written on the paper of one. I have only just discovered another heading: "Constitutional Club, London, W."

"MADAM,

"Your letter in the *D. Mail* is one of those ridiculous letters of a silly conceited woman who is not worth notice. The reason your sex does not merit the attention you so falsely expect is because our sex has become so utterly disgusted with the life and conduct of so many of your sex who have so unsexed themselves during the War and become female monstrosities; you, Madam, I can see indulging in the unbecoming and disgusting habit of smoking and dressing in the most indecent and immoral manner. Instead of prating about your sex, your duty is to reform your own conduct first, and that of others. Learn to be a modest and retiring woman, as God meant you to be, and of the *inferior sex:* then our sex will consider you as only you deserve, and not before. Go to your theatres and M. Halls and see how your sex dress and in the streets, and ask yourself honestly if any self-respecting man and English gentleman is proud of you and your sex and its unsexing of itself, as to utterly disgust all real men and gentlemen."

It was a very bad shot about me. How surprised he would have been if he could have seen me—a respectable grandmamma!

My countrymen in other lands often write to me. I have one immensely long letter full of interesting memories which bears no address. Here is another letter from a compatriot, working in Scotland. He devotes several pages to a criticism of a book of mine, *The House of the Crickets*, which he had been reading. He apparently, had known the parental tyranny which used to be common enough in Irish rural life: it was the main motif in *The House of the Crickets*. After his criticism he goes on:—

"I wonder why it is that Ireland appeals so much to its exiled sons and daughters? Even to one who had known those terrible sordidnesses, drabness, petty hatreds and general wretchedness, she stands as a mother, and

compels me to look towards her across the water with tender eyes of love and regretfulness. Even Patrick MacGill, much as he detests the Irish Clergy, makes all his poor potato-diggers in Scotland yearn for the poverty-stricken Homeland. We are a strange contradictory race. In a few months' time I hope to quit my potato-digging for a brief interval, once more to hear my footsteps echo as I pass by the stately Tower of Reginald the Dane, that grim old pile that stands hard by the spacious Quay of the Urbs Intacta. Dear Waterford, be not angry with me when I turn my back on your once-familiar streets and wend my way to where I shall be within a few miles of *my* House of the Crickets, where, times out of number, a fair-haired little lad, the terror of the neighbourhood, for whom my 'Patrick Moore' (*i. e.* the tyrannical father of *The House of the Crickets*) used to say that a rope was surely spinning, gazed with spell-bound eyes at the terrible pictures in the book, purchased mainly for his correction, *Hell Opened for Christians*, a vain, almost despairing effort to snatch the little chap from the awful fire he was assured was kindled on purpose for him."

I turn from this letter, which concludes with a certain gloomy power remarkable in a man obviously of humble upbringing, to a letter received one of those days from Ellen, who was in the County Clare on her holidays. This was written about the time the Black-and-Tans got going.

"The weather has proved rather disappointing these days, although the country is looking fresh and well, and the Sunny Southerners keeping their reputation under most severe provocation. Day and night the military never seem to halt. Armoured cars, crowded with the so-called Black-and-Tans, with pointed bayonets, etc., making extreme efforts to terrorise the people. I was going by a farmhouse yesterday, accompanied by my

five-years-old nephew, when a party from a passing military car fired two shots and shot a fine, I presume half-a-guinea's-worth of, a hen, within four yards of us. I was thankful not only for my own safety, but that the child did not die from shock; he turned deathly pale and grasped me. I felt very like saying what Mrs. T. R. said to her opponent: 'They had no character, absolutely none, to do the like.' However, I did what all the Clare people do and say is right—passed on in proud defiance. Hoping that there are good times to come—

"Best wishes to you all until the 15th,

"Yours resply.,

"E. KEANE."

Another letter came to me from Newnham College, Cambridge—

"*Clough Hall,*
"*Newnham College, Cambridge.*
"12.5.21.

"DEAR MADAM,

"I am writing a life of James Clarence Mangan, and through some MS. which has recently come into my hands I find that about 1832 he had an intimate friend whose name was Tynan. I have sought everywhere I could think of to seek, but nowhere can I learn anything more of this man.

"So I venture to ask you whether he was any part or connection of your family.

"The MS. contains a letter of over five thousand words written by Mangan to 'My dear Tynan.' I think the full name was William Frederick Tynan, my reason for that being the sheet of the MS. which I have copied and will enclose.

"I trust you will pardon my troubling you; there really seemed no other way.

"I am yours sincerely,

"BERTHA E. LOUGHTON."

I think it quite possible that this William Frederick Tynan was my grandfather. My father's mother, being a Catholic and an only child, had run away with and married in a Protestant Church one Tynan, a young Dublin man. The prejudice against mixed marriages being very strong at that time, the marriage was bitterly resented by her parents. Her husband dying and leaving her and her two children unprovided for, she returned to her parents, who brought up the children in their own name. My father claimed his real name when he grew to manhood, but he could learn very little about his father, whom his mother had not long survived, beyond what I have stated.

It would be curious if the literary gift in my family was derived from Mangan's friend. I append the poem which Miss Loughton kindly sent me.

"LONG AGO!

(By William Frederick Tynan, Dublin, 1831.)

"The twilight shadows are gathering grey
And the wild wind wails o'er the dying day,
As I lie and list to the river's flow
And the far-off voices so soft and low,
Of the long ago!

"The shadows thicken among the trees,
Sadly, mournfully, murmurs the breeze;
And forms glide round me that never more
Shall gladden my sight, for they've floated o'er—
To the unknown shore!

"The moon looks out through the mantle of night
Flooding the air with her liquid light;
And again I live in the rhythm and rhyme
Of a peaceful home and a sunny clime,
In the olden time!

"On the murmuring river the moonbeams dance,
Gilding the waves as they shimmer and glance,
And like ravishing strains from a harp of gold,
The interlude sweet to a tale long told,
Come the songs of old!

" The dreams are all over and darkened the sky.
The winds and the waves wander listlessly by.
And back to my dreary life sadly I go
To dream never more of the bliss and the woe—
In the long ago ! "

Another day my letter-bag contained a long letter from an Australian nun, who had been reading my *Twenty-five Years*. It held a very interesting reminiscence for me.

" Early in the 'eighties," she wrote, " I was going to Dublin from London in the charge of Lady Portarlington, who had been staying with some of my relatives. The crossing was rather rough, and she went below with her maid, I preferring to stay on deck. I was very young and very shy at the time. Not very long had passed before I began to feel ill : I was terrified and looked round about wildly, hoping someone would come to my aid, but being much too shy to ask. But someone saw and understood—the very dearest of old Irish gentlemen came to my help, supported me down the cabin stairs and handed me over to the stewardess. I wanted very much to know who he was, and I plucked up courage to ask, returning a newspaper he had given me earlier. *It was your father.* You will know now with what joy I read *Twenty-five Years.*"

Again there came a poem by John Higgins, of whom I have written in *The Years of the Shadow*. His " Reliquae " were very slender, and though this has little of the nervous force and vision of his prose, it is not, I think, without its charm.

" THE LOST POOLS

" In Breedogue of the slanting moors
Secluded from the passer-by,
In quietude, the twin pools sleep
Amid the heather high.

"Around them nod the branching fern
From banks of gorse and whinny bloom,
To which the enamoured bees return
And the blue moths come home.

"Above their lost, unmovèd trance
The laggard clouds of summer blow,
And linger in their careless course
To hail their ghosts below.

"Suns of bygone unnumbered years
Shed of the dawnings' silvery haze
Test by the pools' relief the torch
That sets the heath ablaze.

"Around them, too, the silences
Throb to the drowsy insect choirs,
Streaming on faint illumined wings
Across the sunset fires.

"To that lone spot of hermitage
The burdened breeze at even brings,
Warm in the glow of magic dusk,
Scents of deflowered things.

"And from afar the spirit clans,
Under the spent moon's eerie light,
Come trooping, to commingle there
The witcheries of night.

"Thus—when the pagan Spirit sheds
Across our world his gloom opaque,
Lost in the moors—the silent pools
See other worlds awake."

This was sent to me by John Higgins's devoted sister.

During those years, too, there came to me letters, poems and pictures from a young writer and artist who will be heard of in the future, Vera Goodwin. There were letters also from Muriel Stuart, from A. E. and Rose Macaulay and the Meynells Mary Sinclair—all manner of people. But in the "Wandering Years" I was not nearly so good a correspondent as I was when I had my own fireside for a permanency.

There came letters of the deepest interest from the sister of "M. A. Rathkyle," who had written one

immortal book, *Farewell to Garrymore*, in which all the sweetness and gaiety and lovableness of Ireland are gathered as in a flask. The little book is hardly known beyond Ireland, although a few discriminating English critics discovered it, and it is not nearly well enough known in Ireland itself. But it is secure of its place. Not only its beauty and charm, but the Anglo-Irish dialect of a day that is gone is gathered between those pages. It will be an Irish classic.

M. A. Rathkyle's sister wrote me once a lovely description of her dead sister. I have not found it among the group of letters from some of which I hope to give an extract or two later, but indeed it was written only for my eyes and heart, and is perhaps too sacred to print.

There is another friendship of those years to which I owe more than I shall say here. It was some time in 1919 that in a bundle of new poetry from the *Bookman* I found *The Singing Caravan*, by Robert Vansittart. The mystery and magic of the East were in the poetry, which indeed drew much of its inspiration from Persia, where the writer had been a young attaché to the Legation. I am quite well aware that the book would not have been every reviewer's meat. A long narrative poem of the East might have daunted the lazy or the careless reviewer. I was fortunate enough to discover its quality, which was very remarkable, revealing a subtle, a daring and a highly sensitive mind and imagination.

My review of it brought a letter from the writer which was the beginning of a friendship that has meant much to me. Mr. Vansittart has let poetry wait upon diplomacy, but his record in literature is sufficiently brilliant, although it has been but a byway of his life. But as it is with friendship I deal here, I will only say that that fortunate review brought me a friendship which has shed a light upon my path, as George Wyndham's widow wrote of my friendship for her husband. My friend will know my gratitude and my everlasting affection.

CHAPTER XXII

AUTUMN

THE boys left us again—first Toby, who had got an appointment under the Colonial Office in British East Africa and was to have a three months' course in London; then Pat, who had entered Magdalene College, Cambridge, where a brother poet of mine, Arthur Christopher Benson, was Master. Our time at Sylvanmount was nearly up, and we had to look about us for a roof to cover us. Since Toby was in London and Pat at Cambridge, we made up our minds to spend a few months in London, so as to be near the boys.

But before that came we had some last pleasures at Sylvanmount. Twice there had been an excursion by motor to Mr. Robert Barton's home at Annamoe, but only once was I of the party, since Pamela had more claim as Dulcibella Barton's friend. She had stayed at Glendalough House during the lonely years at Claremorris, and had loved the activities of the farming life in the beautiful old house. When she had been there the tragedy had not all fallen. There were yet sons of the house, though one had been killed, two serving in the army: Robert, the eldest, being at home on leave. He was in the Dublin Fusiliers, and was in charge of prisoners' effects at Richmond Barracks during the 1916 Rebellion. Mrs. Barton, the English mother of two irreconcilable rebels as it proved, was yet living.

Nothing could have seemed less likely than that the master of the fine house and the spreading fields and cattle should, within a few years, be wearing the broad arrow at Portland. It was an ideally pastoral life then. The household was early astir, early abed, and the land

a land flowing with milk and honey. Everyone was happy and busy. All the visitors to Glendalough House had some share in the business.

It was a mid-September Sunday when we motored to Glendalough House, and Wicklow, the Garden of Ireland, was at her most beautiful. We climbed through hills of golden gorse and on to the wide stretch of bog-country, and so, by all manner of beauties, we came to Glendalough House, which displayed the tricolour on its gates and showed "Long Live the Republic!" on its walls. As we drove up the long avenue, the young officer who was driving us, badly wounded in the War, who was of Robert Barton's regiment, the Dublin Fusiliers, said, "If I had a place like this I wouldn't go to Portland."

No; few of us would. Robert Barton could hardly have foreseen it, or deliberately planned it. A hot-headed speech in which he was alleged to have threatened somebody if a prisoner died in jail—I never yet have been able to discover his own version of it: the evidence was a police constable's memory after twelve months had elapsed—led to a warrant for his arrest, which he evaded for a year. At the expiration of that time he was captured in a search for someone else, tried by a military court and sentenced to ten years' penal servitude. The sentence was reduced to three years, of which he served a year and five months.

He has been as silent about his prison experiences as was John O'Leary, the old Fenian Chief, who never opened his lips about his five years' agony, nor even discussed them in his *Reminiscences*. I happen to know that between November and May, 1920–21, Robert Barton had neither a letter nor a visit, and that he was for six weeks in the punishment cell, which might be labelled "Little Ease," on bread and water. He would still have been the most law-abiding of convicts, but he had joined a strike against some office the prisoners thought they ought not to perform, as he must have felt he was in honour bound to do.

The strangeness of human vicissitudes! The night Robert Barton, manacled, was taken from Ireland by the mail-boat, another friend of ours went by the same boat on his happy honeymoon—one man at the depth of misfortune and despair, as human vision would see it, the other at the apex of felicity, with a fortunate life, as it seemed, spreading before him and his beautiful young bride. Seventeen months later this one was mourning his dead in extreme desolation, and the other was coming back to liberty amid the wild cheers of his countrymen.

In the party at Glendalough House there were three men who had served in the War—two injured—with Miss Barton and Pamela and myself. And there were the empty chairs of the two dead boys—the second had died of gas-poisoning in 1918—and the master of the house in Portland. I thought what a strange gathering it would seem to English people if they could have looked in.

All around was prosperous and beautiful—the fine, dignified house standing above the deep-flowing, amber-hued mountain river, the half-quad at the side of the house, with flower-beds cut in the old turf, and the long windowed wall which suggested a cloister, but was really the back of the cowsheds. Everything was beautifully cared for. Not an autumn leaf had been allowed to lie on the grass or the flower-beds, which were a blaze of pelargoniums and geraniums and all manner of gay things.

The cattle-sheds and stables had a Dutch cleanliness and order. There was electric light everywhere and the most modern fittings. The dairy was beautiful, with its clean fragrant smell of milk and its wide pans of golden cream.

We went round the garden and saw the little trees growing which the master was to plant when he came home. The peach-houses were ransacked for us. We returned home that night laden with peaches, grapes, tomatoes and flowers. The young officer who had driven us said: "People do not usually cut their bedding plants

for their visitors"; but the bedding plants had been cut for us; and Captain David Robinson, the late Lord Avebury's nephew, who was at the moment taking charge of the flowers and the dairy at Glendalough House, went round the garden with a basket, cutting late roses for us, till he was called back to get down the highest peaches, since other visitors had been there before us and had picked the more accessible.

I remember that we sat in Robert Barton's room, a brown-panelled room walled in books, and talked and laughed—laughed as one only laughs in Ireland while not forgetting the tragedy.

There had been a big military raid a few nights before, in which six hundred men had taken part—only to find women in the house. It was suspected that they were looking for General Lucas, who had been kidnapped, and that they came because Robert Barton had written in a letter to his sister: "When I come out it will be time for you to repatriate your prisoner." The prisoner referred to was Madame Markievicz's dog, Poppet, who had been at Glendalough House during the fighting times.

The dusk was coming when we left. We ran along the side of the mountain looking across the bog to the purple cone of the Big Sugar-Loaf. Except for the flocks of geese, the mountain sheep, and the groups of people outside an occasional white-walled cottage, we had the road to ourselves, for we avoided the road of the char-à-bancs. For a long time we had been running by young plantations. Suddenly, we left them behind at the top of a long hill, and the enchanted land of mountain and valley opened before our amazed gaze. The sky had been clouded, but suddenly the clouds had parted, had broken up into gold and silver, with patches of faint ethereal blue. The pure light rained on the valley, and the mountains, clad in light mist, were suffused with all the glories, silver and gold, and rose and amber, and peach and apricot colour. One felt like the Florentine in Rossetti's *Hand and Soul*, who grew faint in sunsets

and at the sight of beautiful persons. Far below us in the shadows lay Dublin of all the Sorrows, shimmering in a rainbow mist.

One day that Summer Erskine Childers came to see us. He was then not nearly so much obsessed by politics as he has since become. We asked him to write his name in the Visitors' Book. He opened it at a page which had a long record of K.O.S.B.'s—*i. e.* King's Own Scottish Borderers, or, as Dublin called them, The King's Own Scottish Murderers, after the affray on Bachelor's Walk in July, 1914. They had, of course, been stationed at Claremorris. "What's this? What's this?" he said. I replied: "Oh, that's to show the military when they raid us. We want your name to show the other people." It was a jest I should be afraid to make to him now. The piquant thing was that Mrs. Erskine Childers, with Miss Mary Spring-Rice, Lord Monteagle's daughter, had brought in the guns at Howth on that July Sunday, which led to the Bachelor's Walk affair.

Politically we were in the unfortunate position of pleasing nobody. We were sadly lacking to our extremist friends, who barely tolerated us, while our good Unionist friends either lamented over us or were vexed with us, as Sinn Feiners. But, on the whole, we did not suffer for our blow being neither hot nor cold, beyond an occasional fleer at me in one of the Republican papers.

All that Autumn we used to be awakened at night by the constantly recurring military raids in the village. They always began with a tremendous barking of dogs. Then one heard the rumbling of the military lorries or the police lorries.

The dogs became so agitated at last as to be quite hysterical. When one saw them in the daytime they were usually fast asleep, having had so many bad nights, but they would spring up and bark hysterically at the sound of a passing foot. We looked forward to a race of neurotic dogs in Ireland, but, since the Truce, they have returned to being quite normal.

Things were ominous at that time, sufficiently so to make Sylvanmount without the boys rather lonely as the Winter drew in. But we had no untoward incidents. The real terror did not come till after we had left. If we had known how bad things were going to be, I think we should have stayed, though not at Sylvanmount, which had to be given up to its owner. We should not have felt at liberty to go—at least I hope not.

However, we were houseless and the servants were on the wing, so we went, leaving the poor dogs, for whom it was so sad a thing to have wandering mistresses, with my sister. We were not to see little Fritz again, and we felt that. As we sat in the cab at the green door of darling Sylvanmount that late October afternoon, saying good-bye to the two servants who had been with us through years of joy and sorrow, it was autumn in one of our hearts at least. Still there was hope. We had been happy in London before, though it was a new experience to be without a house and servants: and it *might* be very nice; we had a puppyish hope or confidence that the world of London was going to be good to us. Soon afterwards we waxed tearful over that vision of ourselves going out alone into the world.

And we needn't have gone—that was the worst of it. Our landlady, who was to have taken over Sylvanmount from our maids, never arrived. She has not arrived since, though that is nearly thirteen months ago. She has been held up by her dog in England, and we need not have left Sylvanmount at all, so far as her return was concerned.

Twelve hours later we were in the depths of misery. A "private hotel," *i. e.* a boarding house, had been found for us by a friend. It had been found for her by the wife of a distinguished artist, and I, being an optimist, with a habit of believing the thing I wish to believe, had made up my mind that it was recommended by the artist. The artist's wife had been very comfortable there for some months. Therefore, to my unfortunate imagina-

tion, the artist had lived and worked there—which connoted a room large enough to be a studio. Running on like this I had told all my friends that I should have a big room, quite big enough to house me and my work. I imagined one of the old spacious London houses.

And—I had been ideally happy in those "Gardens" long, long ago, when I was young and blithe, and I had had the goldenest Summer with the Meynells in 1889.

Twenty-four hours after we had left the little green gate and the mountains and the sea, behold us with sinking hearts looking into the "large" room, which was to house Pamela and me and all our belongings. I had bargained for a large room, and had been told I should have one.

The room, in the high, toppling, narrow house, which was incapable of containing a large room, was a mere dressing-room. When it had received a "suite of furniture"—two narrow beds, our belongings, not to say ourselves, it was utterly congested. We couldn't get up at the same time. If we retired at the same time we had to perform our toilettes squatted on our beds.

My heart was in my boots. How on earth was I going to earn my bread in that room? I asked for a sitting-room. If I could wait a few weeks I could have one—at a price quite beyond me—but it was fireless—fire-grateless, I mean—and the London Winter was a-cumen' in.

The place was quite good as boarding-houses go, I should think. The food was good and plentiful; it was clean; the people in the house were very nice. But—dullness! My fellow-boarders were nearly all feminine—and foreign. There were a few males, but they were husbands and fathers and had private sitting-rooms, and one only saw them at dinner. The drawing-room in the evening was given over to ladies. They were all employed as secretaries or something of the kind in City offices, and they came in very tired. We sat in a semi-circle in the

drawing-room after dinner round a very bad fire while they knitted jumpers and discussed stitches. They then went one by one wearily to bed. Life stopped there about half-past eight.

From the clear shining skies of Ireland and the fresh greenness and whiteness of Sylvanmount, from the mountains and the sea, we came to yellow and black fog. In the day-time we could usually have the drawing-room to ourselves, but there was a coal-strike and the lights were very bad, and quite near, opposite, there were other black-fronted houses, and not a glimpse of sky to be seen. Even when the sun shone the atmosphere was yellow. It is always yellow in London in Autumn, only that those accustomed to it do not notice it.

Because of the coal-strike many people we wanted to see were out of town. The Meynells had not yet got back from Greatham—or they had gone away again, for I remember now that they had called the afternoon of our arrival. Of all our old friends, I think only the Horders, in Hamilton Terrace, were to be found in those early days. They saved the situation for us that first Sunday when, calling to see them, they kept us for tea and supper.

London had all the dreariness of the coal-strike which we were to experience the following May in an aggravated form. It did not add to the cheerfulness that the big houses, north and south of the Park, were closed and shuttered. Not that many of them concerned me, but that it was our highway into town. Even looking at the shops was sicklied over. I have always been an inveterate gazer into shop-windows, and retain the passion even though failing sight has robbed it of its delights; and my daughter—who, at six years old, being given her choice of Liberty's or the Hippodrome, said with large-eyed fervour: "O Mother, Liberty's!"—has inherited my taste.

It rained and it froze and there was always the fog. We used to rush round the Park for exercise, where all

the people went by shrouded like ghosts, and we felt that we must sit down, as an unhappy dog does, and howl with misery.

All those ladies *chez nous* were so charming and gentle and bright, but they were all hardworking and all tired. The one who was not a foreigner and engaged in a public office, was a Scotswoman, a Girton or Newnham girl by her looks. She was very capable and very absorbed in her work. To her came a rosy, comfortable, laughing Scottish mother for a week's holiday in London. She changed everything for us. She amused herself without incommoding the busy bee. She went off to theatres and picture-houses by herself when no one else offered, and she came back of evenings with a long story of adventures. She had done so much in the day; and adventures thronged to her as they do to some people—my brother-in-law, John O'Mahony, for instance, of whom Redmond Morris, the youngest son of Lord Morris of Spiddal, said, "Wherever John is something is sure to occur."

The Scottish Mamma brought exhilaration into the dark atmosphere of the boarding-house. She used to come in bubbling over with jest, her good rosy face beaming and her eyes half closed with the coming laughter.

"And now I'll take off my buits," she used to say, which meant that she had had a hard day of going and would go out no more.

Of course the Scottish accent added immensely to the stories. One day she brought home a story of a man "a bit fou" who came into the tram. He began asking his fellow-passengers: "Did you see me come into this tram?" a question which palled on much repetition. At last he changed. "Do you know who I am?" A bored person answered impatiently: "I don't know who you are: I never saw you before in my life." "Then," said the "fou" man solemnly, "how did you know it was me came into the tram?"

Another time she had sat down at the cinema beside a man from her own town with whom she had gone to school and parted from at the age of sixteen. How they recognised each other! And in a cinema! She gave the whole conversation with such racy enjoyment that somehow it created the whole atmosphere of the Scottish town and the school and the boy and girl of long ago.

Presently we began to find our friends. The Meynells were once again in Granville Place, and the Linlithgows came to Lancaster Gate, so we picked up one and another of the old friends. We went out of town—to the Youngs at Cookham, and the Joseph Kings in their lovely house at Witley; and we went to the Frank Mathews at Wimbledon, and Clement Shorter lunched us, and there were May Sinclair and Rose Macaulay and others.

I believe it might have been quite gay if only we had not felt so desperately on the world for want of a little house of our own, for I had never been without a home of my own from the day I was born, and I could not reconcile myself to having no place to flee back to if things became too unendurable—I mean the shadowy things, like home-sickness which always besets me away from home.

Then, too, we were desperately frightened of the London traffic in the dark afternoons. Once when our good friend, Horace Thorogood, of the *Star*, had come to the dark house with a taxi, carried us off to lunch in Soho and a theatre and tea, and was driving us home, I insisted on walking from the Marble Arch for exercise, little apprehending the eyes and eyes and eyes of countless monsters that should rush upon us from all the wide roads opening north of the Park, where, as often as not, there was no island. I walked up against a kerb running from the eyes, fell, and barked my knuckles and was seized on by a charming lady who appeared out of the night, wearing pearls under her fur coat. She rushed into a chemist's shop to have the wounds dressed with iodine. After that I vowed I should never come to London in the dark days. It was a comfort that our

male friends sympathised with us. Lord Linlithgow said: "Every time I come back to London my heart is in my mouth," and Alan Blake said: "Oh, by Jove! you need to be afraid: it's a very real danger." He, one day after we had lunched with him at the Criterion, set out to take us across to Swan & Edgar's corner of Regent Street, but when he had got some distance he missed us, and turned around to find us shivering on the distant kerb. How I admired him as he strode between the taxis and the motor-buses, waving them off as it seemed, and for the gentle patience with which he came back for us.

A few months later we were quite broken into the traffic, and I would plunge out boldly, side by side with Pamela, having learned to measure by my ears, since my eyes failed me, the nearness of the approaching traffic.

I said to a London policeman one day as I waited on the island, most gratefully: "You are the greatest institutions of the London streets." He beamed and said: "Just for that, I'm going to take you across," and he did, stopping the traffic of Hyde Park Corner, with only two solitary pedestrians to cross over.

The Winter had its sadnesses too—the sadnesses that come so fast as one grows older. Some time in the declining year a most beloved friend, Louise Imogen Guiney, slipped away quietly, as though she would not incommode her friends by making a lingering matter of her death. No one knew she was ill before she was gone. She was a most brave, bright, winning, and fine creature. Her father was an Irish-American soldier, who rose to high rank in his profession in the American Civil War. She was a true soldier's daughter, if one takes the soldier father as representing the best possible of his profession, with the poet added, as soldiers were in Elizabethan days, as they were in the Great War. She had nothing American about her except her boyish fearlessness and independence. She would have walked over the world with a dog at her heels and feared nothing—

"She feared no danger, for she knew no sin.

She had nothing of the newness or the hustle of America. Her spirit was Elizabethan, and still she adored Ireland. England was her spiritual home, because she loved all the ancient and ordered things that only come to a country living at peace—its cathedrals, its venerable castles and houses, its ancient customs, its old literature, its quiet churchyards. She was steeped in the spirit of mediæval England and the twin-brother of her soul was Lionel Johnson—like her passionately Irish, like her under the spell of Winchester and Oxford.

She wrote beautiful poetry, to my mind the most beautiful poetry of modern America. It has not come to its own in English poetry though I saw her quoted in *The Times* the other day, but such poems as the one quoted, a Nazareth poem beginning—

"Vines branching stilly
Shade the open door
Of the house of Zion's Lily,
Stainless and poor.
Oh, brighter than wild laurel
The Babe bounds in her hands:
The Babe who for apparel
Hath only swaddling bands;
And sees her heavenlier-smiling,
Than stars at His commands."

This poem, and the lovely one on Izaak Walton, with its refrain—

"O hush thee, O hush thee,
Heart innocent and dear!"

And that other one with the very spirit of Lovelace—

"Give to my youth, my strength, my sword,
Fruit of the heart's desire,
A short life in the saddle, Lord,
Not long life, by the fire."

These and others should be in the English anthologies, for they were created and inspired by England.

She wrote beautiful prose too, delicate, meticulous, ingenious prose like her letters. She used to say that she

was as Ben Jonson called himself "a costive poet." Nothing she wrote came easily: it was too careful for that, but there is never in her poetry any lack of inspiration. One hopes that such poetry as hers will not be allowed to slip away and be forgotten.

Her personality was most charming. She looked her poetry to the life—just a faint trace of New England—was it her spectacles?—with a candid, clearly cut, boyish face that had the sun and the wind in it. She had been a great walker and globe-trotter, and she had a cosmopolitan spirit. I think, though she would not have acknowledged it, that she had less real affinity with America as we know it than with any country of Europe, which is perhaps involved in saying that she was a daughter of New England. She was straight as a die, full of appreciations, almost over-generous with her friends—altogether a rare spirit.

I can see her now with another rare spirit—like hers, Elizabethan. In a world largely striving and jostling and vulgar, A. H. Bullen was only missed by the few, yet he was of England's Helicon: he might have sat down at the Rainbow with Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, and all the great choir, an ordained member of that company. He was a born servant of the Muses, and what he did for poetry is beyond reckoning and praise. He brought a whole golden argosy of treasure to poetry which without him would have been lost in the seas of oblivion. In him the man of action warred with the poet and scholar. He had no such outlet for his great adventurous spirit as had his brothers Elizabethan. His splendid seas were perforce seas of romantic poetry, but he looked the gallant adventurer always, and he was always a man first, *homo sum.*

His adventurousness broke out in his love of out-of-the-way places in England, where he consorted with real people, with fishermen and innkeepers and all sorts of tramping and wandering persons. Sprung of Irish stock, he was as much in love with England as was Louise

Guiney. I never saw him ruffled with us his friends, but once when we, in the Irish way, disparaged the beauty of English country as compared with Irish. On that happy evening or another he was almost angry with his partner, Harry Lawrence, who ridiculed his friendship with the "Gaffer" of some country inn with whom Bullen ate tripe and drank beer.

"You should see Bullen's 'Gaffer'—a most desperate old ruffian, unshaven and dirty. Just imagine Bullen sitting down with the 'Gaffer' to such a disgusting thing as tripe."

We acknowledged that we had eaten tripe, which mollified Bullen, who had flung back his fair mane, and was gazing steadily at his partner with a kindling light of battle in his eye. The heat died down, but Bullen kept grumbling: "I never knew such a fellow. The idea of calling the 'Gaffer' dirty."

I am quite sure the "Gaffer" was dirty. So were the Elizabethans. Cleanliness among Western folk is quite new. I have heard that Mary Stuart only washed her face once a week, and then in thin oatmeal gruel, so as "not to spoil the complexion of it."

I remember L. I. G. defending dirt, because it was romantic. She, too, would have broken a lance in defence of the "Gaffer."

When we went to live at Chipperfield, Bullen was greatly excited over our choice of a place of residence, because the Two Brewers' Inn on Chipperfield Common had been the scene of various notable prize-fights.

He was not to be found in London literary circles. I am sure they would have been abhorrent to him. Those were great days when Lawrence and Bullen published together and would have turned down the best sellers cheerfully for the qualities that make a best seller. while holding out the hand to the poor poet or the young unknown just beginning. There was always tea when one called in the afternoons, and there was also whisky. Later on there was a partner, Hedley Peek. Lawrence

used to say to Bullen: "Bullen, that whisky is going very fast," whereupon Bullen, shaking his head till the mane was all ruffled would say: "Hedley can take his whack." There was a jolly evening when we dined with them, and after dinner, while we played cards, a tiny decanter of whisky stood before each guest's place. "Everyone is expected to tow their duek here," said Bullen, and was deeply disappointed when some of the guests would not.

When we left that night, or rather early morning—for it was well past midnight—he came with us into the street, where he whistled for a hansom. It was a February night big with the promise of Spring. I remember the fine leonine head—he was bareheaded—flung back and his face to the night sky. "The West Wind!" he said scenting it: "The West Wind! It blows from the country!" "From Ireland!" we said. "I can bear anything in the Spring," he went on.

What did he do in London—this brave adventurer, with all his love of country things and country folk? The little Elizabethan London would have suited him well. If he had died in London he would have "babbled o' green fields."

We were to have visited him at Stratford, but we never did. I remember once we lunched together, he and L. I. G. with my husband and myself. I remember on that occasion he said he was frightened of crossing the London streets, yet the motor was still something to stare at, and the jog-trot of the hansoms and the low rumble of the slow buses made a dull and sleepy murmur. I am glad he was spared London traffic as it is to-day. Of course he was a strayed Elizabethan.

Once he had a great chance of revealing himself. Lord Northcliffe bought *The Gentleman's Magazine* and made him editor. I am sure there never was such a magazine. It only ran to eleven numbers, and I am always grieved that I did not keep those numbers. Some day—perhaps even now—they will be rare treasure-trove to the

bibliophile. It was a terrible blow to him when it ended. He had put his great best into it.

Whatever his years were at Stratford, his closing days were very sad. When my husband died he wrote to me: "I envy Harry. I am very weary of life." The times were out of joint for him. He was just a weary Elizabethan very far from his own kith and kin.

> "Blank misgivings of a creature
> Wandering alone in worlds not realised."

As a publisher he was everything but business-like. He would always give you money when you asked for it, a rare and precious quality in a publisher.

He had not months to live when he wrote me that letter. He, too, slipped away quietly, and the dull world did not recognise that a star had fallen from Heaven, or ascended.

When I have been troubled about my own gift of poetry and have stood in the background, I have counted over those who praised it: Bullen, W. B. Yeats, A. E. Francis Thompson, Alice Meynell, L. I. G., James Stephens—it is enough.

Before I returned home my oldest living friend had also entered the Kingdom. She was Rosa Mulholland, Lady Gilbert, whom I had worshipped in my young days and who was worth all I or anyone else could give her.

These, with Dora Shorter, Lionel Johnson, Frances Wynne, Rose Kavanagh—it would be a long litany—

> "They are all gone into the world of light,
> And I alone stand listening here:
> Their very memory is fair and bright
> And my sad thoughts doth clear."

Those and others dearer make that distant land homelike.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE END OF THE YEAR

To my imagination we were a long time in that dark house, but on looking up my diary I find, as I have often found, my memory, which had seized on the most outstanding fact, at fault. We had arrived on the evening of Saturday, 30th October. On Thursday, 4th November, I find that we took a little flat in Maida Vale, so we had not been letting the grass grow under our feet. The Meynells cannot have been away, for we dined with them on All Saints' Day. The theatre expedition was on the 5th. That week-end we went to Cookham, and the following Wednesday to the Kings for four days. There, in the delightful house, we had as fellow-guest that most charming of old poets, the Rev. R. L. Gales, who read us his old carols of Christmas and Easter and Saints and Angels at night, in the most captivating sing-song while we sat round the wood-fire.

Sandhouse was packed as tight as it could be with people, just like what a house might have been in the Middle Ages, with a difference. There was a happy industry. The family lived in the midst of peasant industries which they themselves had created. If one was inclined, as I was, to grudge Maude Egerton King from literature, it was obvious that to her own mind she had chosen well. And after all "The Archdeacon's Family" is there for some critic to discover in a day to come, with "The Country Heart" and other beautiful short stories. I should give "The Country Heart" a place in an anthology of the English Short Story. Of course, literature was not wholly laid aside, for there was

always the magazine which from *The Vineyard* had come to be *The Country Heart;* and Greville Macdonald, the weaver of beautiful stories, was coming and going about the business of the magazine he edited. "How Jonas Found His Enemy" has no more come into its own in these troubled and tossed days than has "The Archdeacon's Family," but both can wait.

There were three or four ladies of the household who were always cooking or spinning, or weaving or stitching, or painting or embroidering; and there were some charming girls; also there was a couple of refugee children, one from Germany, one from Austria, who were just members of the family. One felt somehow that the peace of God dwelt in the household.

Surrey was wonderful in those days. Autumn was in the honey-colour, which is neither yellow nor pink nor rust nor purple nor gold, but a mixture of all—the colour of ripe bracken. In the train that colour had burst upon me. I had not known what was happening at first. I thought it was a splendid sunset which I could not see when we ran into this wonderfully coloured world after leaving black London behind.

We went over to Haslemere one day to see Mrs. Blount, Mrs. King's sister, and her husband, Godfrey Blount, and found them in their little workshop engaged in making the most fascinating toys. The snow-covered houses and villages, the cribs for Christmas, the delicious flights of birds which ran up and down their perches with a whir which could be felt as well as seen, were all in the true Christmas spirit. We saw Godfrey Blount's Country Church, to which anyone who loved God and his neighbour might come and not have any other orthodoxies offended, and we saw the Weaving and Spinning School at Haslemere, run by the Kings; also spinning and weaving and dyeing and carding were going on in all the cottages around Sandhouse.

I remember Miss Leith, one of the ladies who lived at Sandhouse, showing me a shawl woven from the hair of

the camels at the London Zoo, which they shed at certain seasons. It was a lovely soft warm thing—genuine camels' hair.

One morning we went to see the Dolmetsches at their cottage near Haslemere, and that, I think, was one of the most wonderful cottages in the world for what was being done within it. We had stopped at the gate earlier, but only to arrange a visit, and we had seen Lili, one of the little girls, and Baba, the younger boy, who had come out, climb nimbly to the top of a post and sit squatted there, like a Troll or a Gnome.

The next afternoon Rudolf and Lili came to tea, and after a wild game with the other children and a jolly good tea, Lili, looking like moonlight, sang ethereal songs and danced while Rudolf played, making up the music as he went along. The air of patient politeness with which he played the piano, an instrument which was no instrument to him, was delightful, and his dark young head glowed like a Murillo picture against a background of dark velvet curtain.

We already knew Rudolf and Lili and Baba when we went to the cottage.

We entered the House of Music. Cécile, the eldest child, was absent, but on a window-ledge in the hall were beautiful little boxes of her making, tooled and painted.

Outside the room which was the family sitting-room the bracken came up to the window. It was not a common room. The walls were of pitch pine, unpapered, and upon them were hung ancient musical instruments of many kinds, about which presently Arnold Dolmetsch was very eloquent.

We sat down on wooden chairs as though we were at a concert. The children were occupied. Rudolf, fourteen, but looking no more than eight, bare-headed and of the South, in his jerkin and shorts and his bare legs, went off to his professorial duties at Bedales. The little house-mother hovered between watching over the

dinner, which was a-cooking in the kitchen, and coming back to the music.

While we waited for the children Arnold Dolmetsch played upon the harpsichord, delicate, distant strains of elfin music.

Now and again he took his hands from the keys to break into a brief fiery dissertation on the vulgarities of modern music and musical instruments. His eyes flashed while he talked; he was all fire and fury. He pulled out books and bundles of ancient manuscript music. He had the Elizabethan Bookes of Aires, and one of the things he pored over was a contemporary script of "Lillibulero."

It was like the Tyrol or Bavaria rather than an English cottage in English country, and it was indeed the very home of music. So unchary were they of their music! The whole family played for us, and the music was something strange and delicate, beside which the ordinary concert music is blatant.

The harpsichord, the clavichord, the viol, the 'cello, the virginals—these were the instruments. There was the 'cello of Sebastian Bach himself, shaped slenderly, like a beautiful human creature. Every instrument had its history. Rudolf, back from his teaching, played on the ricordar, looking like Orpheus with his lute. The music was all contemporary with the instruments.

In another room, a workshop this, an artificer with the glowing hues of Italy in his face, but a Sussex villager for all that, and a musician, made musical instruments. Strange that Arnold Dolmetsch should have found this craftsman to his hand, as though it was Italy!

The refugee children at Sandhouse were very appealing. There was Christina from Saxony, a squarely-built, ruddy child, who had gathered English roses on her cheeks since the day she came there, marvelling at the plenty. She had no roses then.

The other child was Marie from Vienna. Pale and fair, she still bore the traces of privation. When she

came first she used to secrete food given to her, with the intention somehow of conveying it to her brothers and sisters in Vienna. She was only prevailed upon to give up this secret hoarding by the assurance that the food was being sent, so that she might eat her fill.

"I," said the sturdy Christina, "I am so immense, so strong, I went on living while the others died. Even when I was hungry, so hungry, I lived, but the others who were not immense like me they died."

Christina was the daughter of a pastor and his English wife. Perhaps because there was so little to spare at the parsonage, the Frau Pastor hardened her children to the cold, to the open air, to doing without the softnesses of life. So Christina lived, to marvel at the plenty in an English house.

"But not all this!" she said, with eyes wide as saucers, "not *all* this, every day!" That was at her first coming.

"When I came first," said Christina, "I was afraid of Marie." She made a queer little sound of many "r's" and shuddered. "When I am told Marie is a Czech, I tremble. The Czechs are cruel; they have been very cruel to my people. Marie is not as the other Czechs; but at first I do not know that—I am afraid."

Marie, like a very pale winter snowdrop, looked up in dumb protest. No one could be afraid of Marie. It was very plain to see that Marie had only just been snatched in time.

We went back to our boarding-house on Saturday afternoon, lunched the next day with Mrs. Victor Rickard at Pinner, dining with the Horders in the evening. Discovering these things in my diary, I begin to think that the sorrow of the dark house must only have been in bits and spread over a very brief space.

One of the alleviations of the time consisted in the three splendid-looking sisters from Limerick who ran the house, with a contingent of undersized London "chars" to do the rougher work. Our hostess assured us that

the running of the house would be impossible for her without these three sisters, who were respectively cook, housemaid and parlourmaid.

Among Irishwomen I give the palm for beauty to Limerick. It is a beauty of bigness and softness, of magnificent waving dark hair, a rosy complexion and a walk like a queen—a very splendid type of womanhood. I saw it the other day in one of the women members of the Dail Eireann, Mrs. Margaret O'Callaghan, the widow of the murdered Mayor of Limerick. If I were a man I should find the Limerick beauty quite irresistible.

Those three sisters had it. I wonder what the Cockneys thought of them! In the dark, narrow, toppling house they had not lost a whit of the look of splendid health which is part of the Limerick beauty. On the evidence of their mistress they were as good as gold. Every Sunday and holiday they attended six o'clock Mass at the Carmelites before the day's work began.

Of course, much was conceded to them, as they deserved. They had *all* gone to see the funeral of Terence MacSwiney—that strange pageant in a foreign city, passing through the incredibly tolerant London crowd, who were hats off as it passed—rightly to the man who had died for his convictions, however people regarded those convictions. London is so strangely apart from England—a people and a country in itself. If it had been more intolerant one might have hoped more.

With those Irish servants one had the touch that is always between the Irish meeting in a foreign country. It is almost worth the exile for the uplift of that touch, the sign, without words spoken, that make the spirits rush together. In Ireland dog may eat dog; never out of Ireland.

I used to give them my *Irish Daily Independent*. When we were leaving, the master of the house, who was a diligent reader of the *Morning Post*, came to me with a generous bundle of stamped newspaper wrappers.

"Mrs. Hinkson," he said, "will you do me a great favour?"

I said "Yes, certainly, if I can."

"I want you to send your Irish newspaper, when you have done with it, to our servants. It will keep them contented to know what is going on at home."

Poor gentleman! I wonder his diligent study of even the *Morning Post* did not teach him better than that.

We were greatly pleased with the change to our little flat, where, when it pleased us, we could shut out the world. It was interesting to find that the "Residential Club" was run by Cobbett's great-grand-daughters, who, as became their inheritance, were very intelligent and of frank, liberal views. There was a much more heterogeneous collection of people than there had been at the boarding-house; and there were various aspects of the human drama to observe and enjoy among those with whom we sat to meals.

The Sunday after we had taken possession we lunched with the Frank Mathews. Coming home in the Tube we saw the flare headlines of the *Sunday Telegram*. (I think that was the paper.) It was the report of the killings of Bloody Sunday in Dublin.

At our Residential Club we might have received some incivilities at breakfast, being Irish, and somewhat flamboyantly Irish at that. But we received none. At only one table was the topic mentioned, and then without anger or horror. Perhaps to anyone who knew the circumstances Croke Park had to be set against that Sunday morning's work. Perhaps it was a war-sated people, who took such happenings in the day's work. But I think it was again the appalling tolerance of London.

A day or two later we went to visit some friends at Chelsea, of warm Irish sympathies, and Catholics. They had been deploring the fact that a cousin who was in the regular Army had been sent to Dublin on intelligence work, very much against all his inclinations. When we

arrived we found him there. He had just come from Dublin to attend the Requiem of the dead Catholic officers at Westminster Cathedral. He had escaped death by the fact that he had gone out that fatal Sunday to early Mass. He came home to find the men with whom he had played cards the night before dead and dying, and his young wife missing. She had only been taken away by the Crown forces for protection, but of that he was not aware till later. He was so profoundly horror-stricken and dejected that one did not know what to say. But the meeting with him sent us to the Requiem at Westminster Cathedral, wishing that all the victims of that day could have been there together commemorated.

I don't think I could analyse, or would if I could, the strangeness of being there, while those coffins went up the great Cathedral and one watched the bowed heads of the mourners and looked at the Auxiliaries who walked behind the coffins. Feeling was so terribly complicated, since in Dublin the victims of the Croke Park shootings were being mourned by our own people. It was almost as though the tragic spectacle and the sadness of the Requiem on the November day were in a sense a demonstration against us, who must have been the enemy to so many of the mourners there. It was not like any other Requiem I have ever attended. I hope I need never attend such another.

At the Residential Club we found again the Irish domination by the kitchen-hearths of London. The cook was Irish, from the County Meath. The whole peace and well-being of the place hung on her. When she frowned her frown was reflected on the faces of the Misses Cobbett and their good Scottish housekeeper. When she smiled all went well. Just then she was not smiling. She was mourning Terence MacSwiney passionately, with an intolerable bitterness in the mourning, because a chance gibe of someone at the dinner-table, who had not believed in the long fast, had been reported to her. I was not there when that happened, but it was

a cataclysm. Nobody got any dinner or lunch that day, which led to great circumspection in speech afterwards.

I wonder how many of those Irish servants grieved passionately for the dying Lord Mayor. Many and many a one, for all of London that I knew was run by Irish servants, and to be Irish and in England at such a time is to know the sweetness and the bitterness of being Irish. Our poor countrywomen! "By the waters of Babylon they sat down and wept, because they remembered Zion."

When the cook was at her stormiest and no one else could approach her, we, her compatriots, could win a smile; though she did once dismiss me, telling me to come again when she was less busy. Some of the Limerick girls' papers were diverted to her, and we found it an advantage to be Irish, since we had the tit-bits.

We grew more and more ardently Irish as the Winter passed and the troubles grew in Ireland. Our country-people who stay in Ireland lose that peculiar joy and pride in being Irish in a foreign, and to some extent a hostile, city. We joined or tried to join Irish societies. We went to all the meetings of the Peace-with-Ireland Council within possible reach. We were at the great Albert Hall meeting, where Miss Margaret Bondfield made the speech of the evening and we wanted to cover her with love and blessings.

The trouble about those meetings was that the attendance practically consisted of people already convinced. On the platform were the good English friends. In the audience—at the smaller meetings—were the Irish. Very often, with their flair for politics, they were there to heckle the good English friends, and did heckle them.

Once in Maida Vale, which was so Conservative that the shops would not stock the *Daily News* or the *Star*, to say nothing of the *Daily Herald*, we discovered green posters in the shop-windows announcing a Peace-with-Ireland Meeting at a local schoolhouse. We could not discover who was doing the work of the meeting, till, in

a greengrocer's shop, we came upon a little gentleman putting up one of the posters with the weary consent of the greengrocer. He was an ex-Indian Civil Servant, one of those justice-loving Englishmen whom one will always find championing oppressed nationalities against their own Government. He was a thoroughly good little man. I don't know how his earnestness overbore those indifferent or hostile greengrocers, etc., to hang up his posters.

He was very anxious about his meeting, as some hostile people had expressed their intention of being present. There was a good platform. Lord Monteagle in the chair; Henry Nevinson, Hugh Martin, a Mr. Gray, a Protestant from County Clare, who in an apparently dispassionate manner, and with an accent Scotch or of Ulster, gave a perfectly blood-curdling account of the things that happened on the Bridge of Killaloe on Bloody Sunday.

That was something the English people would have heard nothing about. If the other side of the question was reported in the *Daily News* or the *Westminster*, it reached only those already convinced. The Die-Hards read the *Morning Post*, and those for reconciliation read the *Daily News*, and no one got anything but what he wanted to get or learnt anything but what he wished to learn.

Our little friend got only one hostile critic, and that was a lady who had no grasp of the subject. The political Irish scored all the time. The audience was practically all Irish. They were wildly enthusiastic. They made speeches and they interjected remarks and they wanted resolutions put which took no cognisance at all of the fact that the Peace-with-Ireland Council was English and law-abiding. They were unreasonable, but one loved them.

As for our little friend, I saw in *The Times* the other day his marriage to a Limerick girl. I don't know if that was a result of his crusade or the other way about,

but anyhow, good, enthusiastic, hard-working friend of an Irish Peace, he deserved the Limerick girl.

On being made aware of our doings Lord Linlithgow said: "Do what you like in Ireland, but I advise you to have nothing to do with Cockney conspiracies."

We did try to belong to the Irish Self-Determination League, but, having offered ourselves to the Central Branch, and being told to apply to Mr. P. Lee of Paddington, we felt as though cold water had been flung on our enthusiasm, and we did no more. But always we were fighting the Irish battle, which indeed was made easy by the friendly interest of the enemy. We have held up long queues of customers in a Kensington bank explaining the Irish trouble to a couple of bank officials, and we had only an extremely interested and appreciative audience, whose business was being hindered.

We used to feel: "Oh, if only one could make them angry!"

You never could. I don't believe the Londoners read the *Morning Post* even. They read the racing and football editions of the *Evening News* and the *Star*.

A very dear little English friend of ours had two Irish maids to whom she was devotedly attached, and they to her. She told us that she had suffered agonies when people at her dinner-table *would* discuss the Irish question. When opinions were unpalatable to Maggie, the parlour-maid, she would flee to her mistress's side, and stooping as though she consulted her about something, would pour her opinion of the offending person into the lady's ears.

"I hope I know my place too well," she explained later, "to drop the hot soup on his head, but if I hadn't let myself go to you, ma'am, I'd have burst."

A new friend that Winter was Shane Leslie, who proved quite as delightful and freakish as his *End of a Chapter*. We had brought him and Lord Linlithgow together for serious discussion on politics, and I am sure they had a glorious time, for they were kindred spirits.

They had been at Eton together, and Lord Linlithgow reported that they had rushed together as though they had never parted. But I fear the serious discussion which we had arranged never took place.

We met John Burns at dinner at the Horders' one night. Gilbert Chesterton, and the Vicar of St. Mark's, Hamilton Terrace, a good Irishman and the son of the great Archbishop of York, Dr. Magee, were fellow-guests. I had last seen John Burns at a dockers' meeting in Hyde Park during the big strike of 1889. We had both been younger then. I reminded him that when the money-boxes were filled that day I had, at Wilfred Meynell's suggestion, handed up my parasol for the money to be thrown into, which it was, in a perfect shower.

He said humorously: "That explains where the money went to that day. I was often puzzled about it."

I said gently: "Ah! you have not forgotten to be the Battersea Cough-Drop." This was an endearing term applied to Mr. Burns by his London admirers. He was vastly pleased at my retort.

But he was more concerned to show how much he knew of literature than he was about politics. He simply would not talk politics, though he was very anxious to try his hand at an Irish reconciliation. My memory is that he monopolised the conversation—with very good talk—even reciting Gilbert Chesterton's poems from memory. Gilbert Chesterton, who can be an intemperate talker, was entirely quenched. He made many beginnings, but never got much further than: "After you, sir."

We have so often almost wept over that vision of ourselves turning from the green door in the white wall, little knowing what was to befall us, that I do not like to part with the pitiful vision. I have always believed, though these things happened not much more than a year ago, that a happy inspiration of mine to rejoin the Lyceum Club saved our life and reason. But—there are the records in my diary: theatres, dances for Pam, dinners

and lunches, a birthday-lunch with Lord and Lady Aberdeen for Pam, and a visit to a show afterwards. The diary is irrefutable—yet we thought we were poor things. It must have been the homelessness, and the being away from Ireland at a time when it felt like desertion to be away.

Christmas Day we spent with the Meynells. There had been a Christmas Eve party at the Horders'. We had a most gay Christmas evening. We played a beautiful game of little horses, with Francis Meynell for the clerk of the course and the starter. It was called Minarue. I do not know if that is how it is spelt.

I played partners with Shane Leslie, and I put in sixpence at a time, rising by degrees to half a crown, all of which was lost. Then the tide began to turn. In the end I came off with twelve-and-six, all of which came from my partner. I have never been able to understand the play. Pam also won twelve-and-six. After Minarue Shane and Francis played a wild game of ping-pong, in which Shane backed himself against all the others. He won and had to pay: I don't explain that either, but in the end we found him preparing to walk home, as his pockets were empty. As we were passing near his house in Talbot Square we insisted on giving him a lift in our taxi, but he *would* come with us instead of being deposited at his own door. He wanted to pay for the taxi too, and asked the taxi-man if he would take an I.O.U. for four-and-sixpence, but the taxi-man was unwilling, so Shane walked home. We shook hands on the stony pavement at twelve midnight on Christmas Day, and he went off, walking quickly through the long vista of blown lights. He had thrust in my hand a visiting-card which I still possess:

Mr. Shane Leslie
I O
The Hinkson Family 4s. 6d.

We must have presented all the appearance of Christmas revellers to that taxi-man.

The last day of the year we went to a wedding—that of Sir William Robertson Nicoll's daughter. It was a very good wedding, and we met many old friends—or at least I did, beside our host. When we were leaving there was some difficulty in finding a taxi. One turned up at last. It proved extremely comfortable, not to say luxurious. We didn't know that it was a private car till we were well on our way. I hope it got back in good time for its owners.

CHAPTER XXIV

WE GO SOUTH

TOBY went over to Dublin in January, 1921, to be married to Moira Pilkington, the niece of Sir Thomas Esmonde, who was in Parliament for a long time, and the great-great-grand-daughter (or thereabouts) of the statesman and orator, Henry Grattan. They went off almost immediately to British East Africa, we seeing them off one morning early from Fenchurch Street and wondering at the number of young men who seemed to be going away. Indeed that Winter and the following Spring we noticed the absence of young men other than those of the working-class in the London streets, especially about the West End, where the fact that I was working at the Lyceum Club brought me most days.

We came to believe that the young men of the professional classes who had not been killed in the War had all gone to the Colonies.

The West End of London was indeed very different from what I remembered it. Coming up to Christmas one had remembered the days of old, with a light haze in the Christmas streets, the sky rose and amber, and the frost pleasantly nipping, the happy people going down Regent Street and Bond Street intent on Christmas shopping, golden lads and girls, children tripping by their fathers and mothers, beautiful tall girls in furs and velvets, gay and gallant young men.

All gone, and in their places stubby men like mechanics smoking their pipes, in company with ladies in musquash coats, for whom the Rolls-Royces waited down Regent Street.

By the shops and the kerbs sat maimed men from the War, selling ridiculous toys, while the piercing wind blew through them and got at the wound or the place where the limb was lopped off. The profiteers in the Rolls-Royces never saw them, any more than they saw the Unemployed collecting-boxes. They always found something to attract them in a shop-window if they happened to be out of the Rolls-Royces when the Unemployed went by.

The Unemployed were everywhere that Winter, marching to a quick-step in all the streets. Not wastrels. Clean, decent-looking ex-soldiers. The men who carried the collecting-boxes did not force them on your attention. You gave, or you did not give, and they turned away. Once I saw a long row of them, very tired, sitting along the pathway by the Green Park. I remembered how they had gone out to martial music and how everyone had cheered them.

Once we saw a one-legged soldier, in the blue invalid uniform, waiting humbly by the kerb in Piccadilly for a chance of crossing. He had an Irish terrier dog with him. They must have waited long, for the traffic flowed in a great tide that took no heed to broken men. Yet not so long before all the traffic would have been held up to let him pass.

Pam had seen the New Year in at one of the big London hotels. She had seen the sum of twopence contributed by the inmates of a huge motor-car to the collecting-box for ex-Servicemen. She had looked on at orgies that frightened her, orgies not of the young, but of the middle-aged and old.

It was the terrible aftermath of the War.

We were quite happy in our flat, despite a little congestion. One day in January we went to see Holland House, in which I had a great interest because of Lady Sarah Lennox and Lady Susan O'Brien and Charles James Fox and all that wonderful group, and to have tea with Lady Ilchester. Holland House is always a wonder,

sitting there in its country fields and gardens, with the roar of London all about it. Indicative of its rural quietness was this happening. I had had a little article in the *Daily Mail* about the London Dog, contrasting him with his country brother. Lady Ilchester had read it to her maid. When she came to the Country Dog shrieking hysterically when brought up against a light railway—it was a very hideous light railway, and I am not surprised at the Country Dog—while the London Dog on a visit to the country just hopped into the horrible thing with his hands in his pockets, so to speak, and took his seat—when it came to this point, the maid cried out enthusiastically: "Oh, m'lady, that lady must have known *our* dogs." It was the Country Dog face to face with the traffic which elicited this tribute.

Returning from our visit we saw an old friend, Jessie Payn, the daughter of James Payn, the novelist. She had just taken a house in Gordon Place, Kensington, and having been disappointed of someone she expected to join her, she was very keen that we should come in their place. So, with some regret, we gave up our little flat for the Kensington house.

I believe our stay there was the happiest part of our London Winter. We were very comfortable, and that bit of Kensington, the Georgian or Queen Anne bit, is very fascinating. For a residential bit, so to speak, London has nothing to equal Old Kensington, and the atmosphere was all about us. Even a towering block of flats took on there something of a reflected beauty and dignity.

We were fortunate in the circumstances of the various places at which we sojourned. We always came upon intelligence. Miss Payn's West-Country lady-help was charming, full of goodness and efficiency and quick-wittedness, and a dear little woman to look at. Her fiancé, an ex-soldier, we soon came to number among our friends. He was quite uncommonly intelligent, with a real flair for politics, not at all common in England. I'm afraid, with regard to the Unemployed and the

Irish, we were rather a thorn in our poor hostess's side. We were *all* passionate politicians. There must have been a fearful lot of clatter about her poor Conservative head, for what chance had one against so many and so vehement?

We, being people to whom our surroundings count, who are perceptibly less happy for an uncongenial person, even in the kitchen, of whom, if we were English, we should be unaware, must have been the subject of a special kindly dispensation, since, everywhere we went, those who ministered to us had some special interest for us.

Our friends at Gordon Road married before we left London. I pray that they may be as happy as they deserve.

London has her wiles, her charms, and Old Kensington is a fragrant memory. Those mornings when I went forth to Mass at the Carmelites, when the first thrush sang in the monks' gardens, and the sparrows were full of a chattering unrest, were very happy. I was always going a bit of the way with some of the members of the congregation picked up haphazard, and becoming very friendly, and they always knew my books—which is one of the advantages of being identified with a relatively small Church and people—and they were usually Irish, and we used to part in a glow of good-will.

I'm afraid I often came back on those peaceful mornings, when the West Wind was blowing the Spring into London streets, to engage in a windy battle of words over the Irish War, for day by day the gloom deepened, and day by day the country that was in agony was more passionately beloved of her children. We hated to be away, but there was nothing for us to return to, or we did not know that there was. Only when the die was cast did we learn that little Sylvanmount was at our disposal. We had a moment of hesitation, but we were pledged to go to Italy, else others would have to stay at home, so finally we abode by our promise.

Anyhow we did our duty to Ireland by the waters of Babylon, and we found very few of the Babylonians who were not willing to listen. The Londoners were often extraordinarily receptive and sympathetic. Perhaps sometimes they were afraid to be otherwise.

We saw old and made new friends. There were Sundays when we went to the Arnold Bennetts, very entertaining Sundays, when there was political talk, which was much more wholesome and breezy than talk of books as I knew it in literary circles in London. It used to be in a special way shop-talk. The 'nineties had given me a surfeit of it; prices per thousand and biggest circulations, and all the crowded rooms shrieking like the parrot-houses at the Zoo, and the gist of it the making of books and the prices to be obtained for them. Flesh and blood was only matter for books, and the veins of these literary men and women ran ink instead of blood. I am not saying, of course, that there were not people who loved literature for its own sake: I am only talking of literary côteries of the 'nineties, and the queer unpleasant things that came out of them.

Far other was the little and memorable movement in Dublin into which came W. B. Yeats and A. E. and Douglas Hyde, and others who were, beyond their own actual achievements, the precursors. That was a pure movement, in which money and worldly success were never dreamt of. It is perhaps to the good that literature as a profession is unknown in Ireland, where people write for love and very often must publish for love.

Arnold Bennett used to silence a lady of the côterie who ventured into the political discussion:

"You hold your tongue, Violet. You know nothing of what you are talking about. Mrs. Katha*rine* Ty*nan* Hinkson is steeped in politics to her finger-tips. She was born to them."

Which indeed was true. It might be better for us in Ireland if we were not born to them, but, Heavens, how fascinating they are!

He always gave me my full name, with the accent on the last syllable of my Christian and maiden names.

Again he used to silence the discussion of unsavoury topics when they arose :

" Remember that Mrs. Kath*arine* Ty*nan* Hinkson is in the room."

I don't know why there was this tenderness to my susceptibilities, unless he meant to hint obliquely that my books were milk for babes. I, who had been adjured by friends in the 'nineties and since to let myself go, as though there was always *that* held back. It was no use telling them that I let go what I had. They used to shake their heads sorrowfully over me, and say that I had *It* right enough if I would only let myself go. I think in time they gave up thinking, or even suggesting, that I had *It*. Of course he might have meant that Pamela was present. I like to think that he meant that.

I liked Arnold Bennett very much indeed. He was very pleasant to me. But I think he thought me very much of a country cousin. Once I broke into his conversation with a very artistic lady. They were both discussing Brabazon, of whose work Arnold Bennett had a few examples which he was very proud of possessing.

" Is that the Sussex artist ? " I asked humbly.

Perhaps I was wrong in calling him the Sussex artist. Arnold Bennett waved me away indulgently.

" No, no," he said, and went on with the conversation.

" Well, he may not be the Sussex artist," I persisted, " but I know the house in Sussex which contains more Brabazons than any other building in the world, and I can go there any day I like. In fact I am specially asked to see the Brabazons with other things."

They both turned and stared at me. That was the score of the country-mouse, and it was quite true, barring the " more Brabazons," which was a little bit of swank : I did not know *how* many Brabazons there were there or elsewhere.

I should like very much to meet Arnold Bennett

away from the London literary parties. I will say for him that he agreed that literary circles were poison. I think he is really a man and a brother. I forgot to tell him how in the 'nineties I used to come home from a party which could never get away from the Bodley Head, and flee to the society of my next-door neighbours, who talked of nothing but servants and children and household matters. *Anything* to get the taste of ink out of my mouth!

At the end of February we went off to Italy, where Mrs. Gwynn and Sheila were already, having wintered at Florence. We had had Summer-like weather in London—all the birds singing in the Park and the bulbs out and the Park squirrels skipping in the glades. There was a day in February when the Silence-Room at the Lyceum Club, where I worked all that Winter in perfect comfort, grew unbearably hot, even with all the windows open, for the temperature was higher than it had been on the previous Midsummer Day, and the roaring fires the Lyceum knows how to keep were quite out of season.

We were a party of eight women going to Italy, and we went in very happy circumstances, for a beneficent friend had given me an Embassy pass, and the path had been smoothed for us by him in every way possible. The party included, with ourselves, Viola Meynell and a French cousin, two young girls of Viola's party, very pretty and charming, Sibyl Fisher, a daughter of Mrs. Forbes of Rothiemay, and a friend of ours from Killiney, County Dublin.

The Embassy pass worked magically till at Modane it was retained by Cook's interpreter, a fact of which I was not aware till Modane had been left behind. We had started from London in beautiful weather, the beginning of the long wonderful Summer of 1921. We had sweltered on the train-journey from Calais to Paris, and had provided ourselves before we left Paris with several bottles of mineral waters for the thirst we anticipated during the night. We had started in a mood of exhilara-

tion, which was not daunted by the prospect of two uncomfortable nights in the train, for we had applied too late for sleepers.

When we left Paris there were only four of us to each compartment, but we had taken in a nice English nurse, who had been stranded for a seat, which made things rather uncomfortable for the one who had not a corner seat.

I shall not forget the heat. We had not discovered the way of covering the heating apparatus in the floor, having started by night and being already rather dazed with fatigue. Our feet were on the uncovered metal, and I can answer for it that mine boiled, baked, stewed and grilled. It was a comfort to reflect that my shoes were an old pair, and of suède, not leather. Owing to the presence of the fifth passenger there was no chance of even giving the unfortunate feet a respite by putting them up on the opposite seat.

For myself let me say that it was a night of mild torture. One could only endure the heating apparatus by holding up one foot at a time, or sitting, for as long as it could be done, with one's feet tucked under one. It was a truly horrible prospect for the whole night, the one alleviation being that no one objected to having all the windows open.

There was a bottle of mineral water for each person's consumption during the night, and three over for the people next-door. Those who had sallied forth at the last moment, perceiving that the night was going to be tropical, and had procured the water, were inordinately proud of themselves.

After a time I fell into an uncomfortable oblivion from the overheated carriage, the grilling floor and the cramped attitude, and slept uneasily against a pillow which kept slipping and slipping. There came a dream in which it was raining hard and I was getting drenched. There was a peculiar noise with the rain. I started, wide awake—a bottle in the rack had burst and was

descending in showers on my head, with a loud fizzing noise.

I bore it very well. I was really glad of an excuse to lay my pillow on the floor to dry, since it afforded my feet some protection from the grill. It was a change from grilling to steaming, but my feet welcomed the change.

During the night the seven bottles exploded at intervals. Everyone was drenched, so there was no favouritism. It was creditable to the rest of us that we did not blame those who had had the shocking bad judgment to buy the wretched bottles.

When there were no more bottles to burst and we were all wet we slept, only to be awakened by the bitter cold of a chill dawn. We were in the Savoy Alps and it was snowing. We felt for the first time real bitterness about those bottles, and we might have been captious but that we were still in holiday mood.

The guide-book which the young ladies had studied had laid it down as a first rule that it was most inadvisable to speak to men one met travelling abroad, with a special ban for the foreign man.

The first man turned up at Chambéry, where we got out to snatch an uncomfortable breakfast, but he was English and a thoroughly respectable young man. After Modane there were two Americans. At Turin we were turned out of the train and told to go back home, since the Revolution had broken out in Florence. We declined to go home, saying that we were accustomed to Revolutions and real ones.

There was a train just starting for Genoa from a distant platform. We compromised on that. The Englishman and the Americans carried the luggage—that is to say the hand-luggage to which our experienced fellow-travellers had restricted themselves. They lost it all on the way home, while we arrived with our trunks intact.

In the Genoa train, where we got a very good dinner—it was the only train I met in Italy for which I had any

respect—while I talked to a couple of kind and helpful Englishwomen, the young ladies added an Italian Professor to the queue. It was lucky they did, since when we arrived at Genoa at midnight, asking for beds for eight people, it was he who at last procured them, turning out himself to sleep in the bathroom. I believe that night, while we sat in the shade of the palm-trees outside the pillared colonnade of Genoa Station, underneath the stars, was the first and only time I *felt* Italy. I sometimes thought I did afterwards, but I don't believe I really did, except going through the Alps on our way homeward.

At the Genoa hotel, where we stayed a couple of days before the wretched little spitting Revolution in Florence finally fizzled out, to which the queue came and went, I was taken up in the lift one day as a concession by the head-waiter. He had been some years in London but the amount of English he had acquired said nothing for his capacity of learning languages. However, he could make himself understood and could understand me. On the way up in the lift he got in more politics than I could have believed possible considering the limitations of his English.

At my floor he came out of the lift to dance a War-dance round me. "Si, si, Signora! Sin Fine!—si, si. There came here a Signor, Irische, non Inglese. He is Sin Fine. Si! From his foot to his knee, up, up, to his head, he is all Sin Fine. So he say when I ask him."

This completely Sinn Fein gentleman was, we discovered afterwards, a well-known Dublin publisher, with whom we were all acquainted.

There was a fearful rough-and-tumble to get into the first train for three days to Florence. I don't know what became of the queue, but we should never have got in if it had not been for an Italian porter, who, in the moment of our worst despair, fell as it seemed from Heaven, and shouting "Qui! Qui!" rushed us and all our belongings into a third-class carriage in which there was a good-looking Italian of the small bourgeois class

and a couple of soldiers. It was a troop-train going to Florence to keep the Revolution in check, which added to its congestedness.

The soldiers were only keeping places for their officers, who arrived presently and had an altercation, which we thought must end in bloodshed, with the other Italian. It was obvious to us that they could not possibly sit in the carriage with a common person—but, just when we waited to see the low-down one bayoneted by the two private soldiers who stood waiting, respectfully, the whole rumpus died down, with a suddenness that left us gasping, and the General and Colonel departed to another carriage.

Some of the young ladies were inclined to ban and not to bless Giovanetti—that was his name—who sat tight and gave lessons in Italian to anyone who would take them all day. Now and again an officer in the beautiful blue cloak lined with scarlet would come and look in gloomily, sending thunderous glances at Giovanetti, finally raising his eyes to Heaven, shrugging his shoulders, and going back to where he had come from.

There was one specially beautiful young officer who, towards the end of the journey, refused to be beaten by Giovanetti; he could at least stand in the doorway, hand round his gold cigarette-case and talk gravely, trying to make himself understood to the imperfect Italian ear of the party.

At Pisa he left us, to our great regret. So did Giovanetti, who had become a bore. Between Pisa and Florence there was an Australian. At the end of the day I counted up eight—and the young ladies had been warned against speaking with strange men and especially foreigners! But they had been very useful.

CHAPTER XXV

FLORENCE

For some reason or other I had had no real joy in the prospect of the Italian journey. Doubtless it was to some extent due to the feeling that we ought to be at home. The Irish always laugh: but there was no real happiness possible that Winter as things were in Ireland, and we hated our immunity as we had hated the immunity from the personal dangers of the War in the West of Ireland.

The Revolution had died down in Florence, although there were still a few unburied Fascisti and Socialisti and the streets were guarded by soldiers. The Brothers of the Misericordia were still conducting quiet funerals to which no one wished to call attention, side by side with a ceremonial funeral of one of the Brotherhood, who had died a natural death. I saw his coffin lying in the Chapel of the Misericordia, between the great silver candlesticks, covered with flowers. The Fascisti and the Socialisti were still growling at each other from behind barriers.

Mrs. Meynell had shaken her head over our choosing Florence so early in the year. She had been pessimistic. "I have never been as cold in all my life," she had said, "as I have been in Florence."

She shivered as she said it, and we thought that she was always sensitive to cold, and that *we* were quite otherwise.

I had no such thrill at entering Italy as I had had in 1914. Then, waking up in the little gimcrack-carriage of the train-de-luxe at four o'clock on the May morning, I had knelt for my first view of Italy, and had beheld only thick mist covering the desired country.

I am inclined to think that fatigue and the queer eating on the journey must have been responsible for the chill feeling with which I came to Florence. I shudder now to think of the horrible things we ate: the tough slices which might have been the meat of any animal; with its hair worked in, had the consistence of india-rubber; and we had washed it down with the sourest of sour wines. Even a glimpse of the Duomo caught from the vettura as we drove in the twilight hardly stirred me. Perhaps, as Mrs. Meynell had said, it was the wrong time of the year. It was not warm at Florence, and the streets seemed to me to lack the brilliant colour of that happy May in Rome.

To be sure the wine-carts came in from the country covered with their great scarlet umbrellas. There were the most beautiful white oxen to be seen in the streets. They were the very aristocracy of white oxen, selected to draw the decorated chariot of the Sacred Fire on Holy Saturday, but I did not know that when I came on them walking one day, stately, silky muzzle to muzzle and rose-lined ear to ear, really and truly the most beautiful things in Florence. There were lovely children. After a few days the flowers began to appear in stacks on the pavement outside the florists' shops and in the arcades which led to the hotels. At every street-end you caught a glimpse of the Duomo, which, to my purblind eyes, was like a gigantic carving in ivory: I could not see the rosy glow which other people saw.

I looked back to Rome and I remembered the scarlet-robed students of the German College walking side by side down leafy avenues. I remembered the different habits of the Orders, and the difference in their faces. A Spanish monk who conducted Mrs. Forbes and me to the Jesù one day wore the swarthy livery of the burnished sun; he was almost black. The girls wore brilliant colours on their dark hair, in their petticoats, in the little shawls about their shoulders. And there were always the soldiers.

Florence, I think, except for the soldiers, showed the picturesqueness of dirt for the greater part. There were beggars, if you like that kind of picturesqueness; but gaiety of costume there was none, except for the soldiers.

Perhaps one expected too much of Florence. Perhaps one always does expect too much of Italy, and no country in the world could answer the expectation. In the early days I was always hoping to find Italy and thinking I had found it. Once it was on the ascent to San Miniato when I looked over the plain and the mountains with the thin thread of the Arno stealing under the bridges, and suddenly the noon-day gun went off and the *Angelus* rang from all the belfries, which seemed to rock with the sound, so that Florence in its valley appeared to be shaken. It was what Browning saw from Casa Guidi Windows:

> "The air broke into a mist with bells,
> The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway."

At this point I am reminded by Pamela that I saw Pre-War Rome and Post-War Florence, and the reminder is timely. How should I expect to find in Florence what I did not find in London or Dublin—the flower of youth that had perished in the War?

I do not know if the Romans are a bigger race. Certainly the Florentine men seemed very small and the soldiers under-sized. But there were plenty of men, a greater plenty than I had seen anywhere else. The open spaces were black with them on market-days; and in the afternoon of any day at all it was difficult to push your way through the crowds of gesticulating and talking men. It was explained to me that in an Italian town all the business is done in the streets—there is no quiet talking in offices.

The weather was cold and hot. We, foreigners, walked in the sun and rejoiced in it: the Italians do not walk in the sun. On the other hand, they sat on stone seats in much less warm clothing than ours, under the long

Colonnade of the Uffizi or in the great Square of Santa Croce.

I should have been content with finding Italy from the Piazza Michelangelo on the hill-side. Then I might have retained it. But on a day when the Tramontana was blowing—it was nothing like as bad as an English east wind, but it had searching qualities—a cold, bright, heartless day, our friend from Killiney, who never saw a tenth of what she wanted to see, led me up to San Miniato, the great church of the Franciscans, which has become a church of the dead. I could have borne the crypts and the tablets and the graves, everywhere in San Miniato itself, which might have been built yesterday for the jewel-like freshness of its marble, but my friend also wanted to see the Campo Santo and to see it thoroughly.

Perhaps it was what I had against Florence, that it was a mausoleum. Not that I am afraid of the beloved dead, but that the Italian manner of commemorating them seemed to my insular mind vain and heartless.

I love the humility, the abasement, of death, which in the Middle Ages laid a dying king on ashes on the floor, that, so greatly and humbly, he might pass into the presence of his Creator. St. Francis's Little Sister, the Death of the Body, wore strange gauds everywhere in Florence. It was a City of the Dead to my mind, a city in which mortality was honoured with a pagan splendour of rites.

I suppose it is the everlasting difference between the North and the South—or perhaps I stand alone, for I love the commemorations of the dead in St. Paul's scarcely more than I love the Campo Santo at Florence, or the Panthéon, or Santa Croce, or any other place of great tombs; or, for the matter of that, city graveyards of any kind. I would not burden the earth with stones because some mortal has passed to immortality. I choose the iron crosses of the soldier and the monk. They are enough.

But the Campo Santo! The glittering monuments were placed side by side over a great space. They seemed

to me of a singular soullessness, though the people were very proud of their Campo Santo. The great of Florence were housed in small palaces. Over the graves were carven busts of the dead, the work of the stonemason, not of the sculptor. There was a terrible realism. A child who had been drowned had her dripping garments and long, wet hair reproduced in marble. You were startled by the spectacle of a man wearing a Trilby hat reappearing in various aspects, till at last you came upon him in stone. Everywhere there were the photographs of the dead, often very unprepossessing, attached to their tombstones.

Cypresses and hard, white, glittering marble and the mortal pride and pomp of death—they went on and on endlessly, and as well a hard, unveiled, glittering sky, and the Tramontana blowing from the eternal snows. I got a grue at it. I recognised that all the charming villas and the pretty walks of the hill-side and our own Pensione were all dominated, sat upon, so to speak, by the Great City of the Dead. Campo Santo—the Field of the Saints, or the Holy Field; it grew only stones.

The result of the grue or the Tramontana was a sharp, somewhat mysterious illness, which left me so weak after thirty hours of it that it took me months to recover. These sudden short fevers were common in Florence: I have known them to be over in an afternoon.

After that I had little pleasure in the pretty room, with its white and gilt furniture, which overlooked the garden of the Count's Palace, where you could watch the processes of the season and the flirtations of the gardeners with the maids, and on the other side the toppling houses crowded from basement to roof with quiverfuls of children, of whose doings when they rose up and went to bed you were aware: they spent their days in the streets. On top of one of the houses a large black dog used to appear and look over the parapet. I suppose when the weather served the family used the roof as an outdoor parlour.

The Italian aristocracy leads a secluded life in its beautiful houses and gardens. I was told that quite early in the morning the ladies of the aristocracy might be seen sipping their chocolate after Mass at Doney's or Giacosa's. We were never early enough for them. That morning chocolate was one of the events of the day in Florence, and at Doney's or Giacosa's you met everybody.

The Italian servants were charming, beautiful to look at, soft-spoken, gentle, deliciously amiable. The children were like flowers or ripe fruit. They were extremely spoilt, especially by their grannies, and they used to swing like a flight of birds from the cassock and the hands and the surplice of the padre of San Niccolo which was round the corner from the Pensione. Very fittingly, it was there I saw the children at play.

San Niccolo is a small church for Florence; it would be a big church in England; and it is quite uncomplicated. No seeking for hidden altars and chapels across great spaces; no distractions of Great Art. The distractions were the children. Perhaps God, who made the children so alluring, would understand and smile at the distraction.

The children kept wandering in and out, like the birds that fly in at the open door and out again. Unlike the great Florentine churches, San Niccolo is warm, because the sun comes in and the warm wind. There was the sound of the dragging feet of very little children. In the porch and on the steps there was a chattering of children like so many sparrows under the eaves. It was Palm Sunday, and the children, soft as pansies or dark roses, came down from the altar, their arms full of palms.

Beauty is the prerogative of every Italian child, as is love. The children are adored. You will see it in the adoring Madonna of the early Italian painters. They are perfectly fearless and absolutely unconscious. They have their place in the sun unquestionably, like the flowers or the birds.

The children were perched all along the altar rails,

like birds on a parapet. They came in singly, in couples and threes, sometimes with their elders. They came hand in hand.

The Italians—of Florence at least—are a small people. Some of the children were infinitesimally small. Their smallness in itself was an appeal, a delight, and it was coupled with an indomitable spirit and gaiety.

Then came three little boys, hand in hand, the youngest a minute speck. The eldest of the three, having in vain endeavoured to make his brothers kneel down decorously, retired himself to the side of two good little sisters. The two smaller boys stood solemnly in the middle of the church and stared.

Presently out came the eldest one, and after a struggle collared one child, carried him away, fighting all the time, and deposited him between the two little sisters, who formed a bodyguard. The smallest child remained. Flushed with victory came the eldest one and attempted his capture. A well-directed kick sent the policeman flying back, and the small boy remained in possession of the field.

A little boy in full naval uniform walked solemnly down the church. He might represent the Fascisti, perhaps. Anyhow, he was too much for the eldest of the three little boys, who hopped nimbly out of his seat and mimicked the young Admiral behind his back before returning to his place.

Then came a little girl, who, kneeling before she left the church, crossed herself and kissed her hand towards the altar. The great bunch of palm in her arms, against her little breast, was the last touch of beauty.

Meanwhile, the littlest one held the very centre of the church. His attention arrested by the chatter of the children outside, he strolled away to see what it was all about, and, finding it not to his liking, came back again.

Presently another came, as like to him as two peas. I lost the sense of which was which as they went strolling

round the church, constantly bobbing up again. One of them performed an act of brigandage upon another infant who had come in with a balloon in his arms. The altar-servers turned and looked on with interest.

A Sister of Charity, with a head-dress at least four feet wide from tip to tip, intervened at this stage, captured a whole bundle of infants, offensive and inoffensive, carried them to a side altar, and with a shake and slap deposited them there.

For a second all was quiet. Then came the two strollers again, irresistible and absolutely unconscious.

It was Palm Sunday and there was the long Gospel of the Passion. All during the recital of the most solemn tragedy of all the world these infants played. Their play did not take one's mind from the Passion or one's prayers. It was the very happiness of religion, and there can be no true religion without happiness.

One felt that God, who made the children, smiled. And surely, in the background, San Niccolo held his sides and chuckled.

San Niccolo was the only church in Florence where I could say my prayers. The incessant passing to and fro in the Duomo where one might have been devout, the coldness of Santa Croce, the stuffiness of so many of the churches, which had never admitted a breath of air since their building, perhaps the strangeness, weighed upon me. I found a tiny Oratory not far away on the banks of the Arno—a War Memorial probably—which was lit all day long and opened straight on to the street. That was devotional when there were only a few people there, but at Benediction it was tight-packed with the working people, many of them old and with terribly rasping voices. The great thing about the little Oratory was that the visitors were not attracted to it.

I should respect the Italians if they closed their churches, at least during the hours of Service, against the tourists. I had heard the English denounced for their conduct in the churches abroad, but my experience was that they

were the least offensive. An Englishman took off his hat and held it in his hand while he strolled quietly round the church, looking at what he was told to look at. His women-folk might consult their Baedekers, but they did it quietly. The French I found by far the most offensive, and the Americans came next.

I remember the Mass of the Pre-Sanctified at Santa Croce on Good Friday, when at the most solemn moment of the Mass a French family, Mamma and Papa, a couple of long-legged boys in socks, ditto girls in plaid frocks, trailed along between the altar and the congregation, staring oafishly at the priest and about the church. The most polite nation can be shockingly impolite to other nations.

If an Italian had got up and knifed the whole French family I should have loved that man.

Again, during a High Mass, I saw a party of Americans go on to the very altar at which the Mass was proceeding to examine the frescoes curiously and at length.

The Americans were sometimes amusing. It was on Holy Thursday, during the great ceremonies, that an American lady bent to me with an engaging confidence: "I'm sure I don't know what the old gentleman in the red hat is doing, and perhaps you can inform me; but if you can't, I think he's just cute, all the same."

There was an appalling moment during the Adoration on Holy Thursday at Santa Maria Novella, when, in the wake of some tourists, the gloom preventing us from seeing properly, we strayed in at a low door, which immediately closed and locked, to find ourselves in what is called a "tribune" by the side of the High Altar, where knelt half a dozen veiled figures. None of us had any right there among the "Watchers," and it was deeply mortifying to have intruded with the gaping tourists, who just stared without understanding and immediately tried to get out by way of the High Altar. We were turned out very unceremoniously, and though it was ignominious to be treated as an ignorant tourist,

it was good to see anger on account of an unseemliness which was always in evidence, and only not an outrage because it was not intended to be one.

The little church of the Franciscan Monastery at Fiesole was another place where one could kneel and pray. There was Italy, with the splendidly sunburnt and graceful young monks, in their brown habits, going up and down the hill-side and through the little town. The monks were always a part of Italy, and it was delightful to be shown the cells where the Saints once lived and prayed, lit by a pointed unglazed window through which one saw a slender cypress like a black flame against the burning blue of the sky.

One always scored in such circumstances by being of the Religion and knowing the history of the Saints, and I, who was devoted to St. Francis and had written many poems about him, was always an acceptable visitor to the friar chosen to look after the visitors—chosen, one must imagine, not only for his smattering of tongues, but for a cheerful robin-like friendliness which was especially bestowed upon the female visitor.

It must have been such a bore—all day and every day, receiving these herds of misunderstanding, gaping visitors, who were always having to be rescued, just in time, from entering the enclosure of the Monastery. I think if Italy were to be my spiritual home in all else, I should abjure her because she receives the tourists. And the horrid thing is to feel oneself a tourist, in nowise distinguishable from the herd.

There came up with us in the tram to Fiesole one day an English middle-class gentleman with two daughters, very typical. He had no Italian, and he did not want to have any, and he persisted gently but firmly in talking English to the conductor, with whom he had some difficulty about the fare, saying over and over again the thing he wanted to say, as though the repetition would make his meaning plain. He got rather angry about it in the end, and had a pugnacious air, as though to say:

"If you don't know English, why the devil don't you? I certainly am not going to encourage you in such an ignorance."

When at last an islander had intervened and made things clear, he turned to one of his daughters:

"Your composure, my dear," he said, "must be a surprise, and I should hope a lesson to these excitable foreigners."

When I used the trams in Florence I mentally apologised to the male Londoners whom I had been rebuking in the *Daily Mail* for their lack of manners in the Tubes, at the crowded hours.

"The Londoner will not give his seat to a woman in the Tube," I said; "but Our Lady would have to stand in an Italian tram if She came into it."

The only time I was ever given a seat in an Italian tram was by Brother Boche.

I was not much in love with the Italian bourgeoisie. One encountered litle graciousness except from the people. Florence, always wonderful, was never so wonderful as after the nightfall, when, in the narrow streets, you caught a glimpse of mediæval interiors—now a stately room, unsuspected from the dingy exterior, fit for kings and queens; again a group of cobblers sitting around a table cobbling shoes with noble, grave heads bent above the work. Once I took my watch to be mended; it had met with an accident. A couple of watchmakers sat at a table in the shop. One of them examined the watch. "Ah," he said, "it is very much hurt. It will need much carefulness." It was as though the watch lived.

The Florentines went about the streets singing at night, and it was like the Opera. Once as a party of us came up a dark street from the Opera House a group of revellers ahead suddenly threw up the shutters of a dark shop and disappeared into the lit interior, drawing down the shutter again, so that the streets were once more dark and silent.

One night after a young niece of mine who was training for grand opera had sung the soprano part in a scena from *Madama Butterfly*, the male part was taken up outside the window and sung with great brilliancy and verve, and then the voice trailed off into the night and was gone.

I had two great disadvantages in Florence : I was blind and I was deaf and dumb—that is to say, I had not the language, so I could not get at the people. All might have been changed if I had had the language.

Florence was very hospitable if we would have stayed. There was one of the Spenders controlling the British Institute, of which I was made free, and where I was invited to lecture. There were the Herbert Trenches at Cettignano, to whom we should have gone. There was dear Sir Francis Vane, full of kindness and hospitality. There were his cousins from Galway, Miss Ffrench and Miss Burke, who had lived since they were young in a suite of stately, very Italian rooms, full of their family portraits, of old glass and silver and furniture, keeping still their carriage and coachman, as everyone of their class would have kept them in Galway. One of those exiles died since we were in Florence. She was a lovely old lady, soft-spoken and gentle and merry. She turned to the girl when we were all talking politics. " Come now, my dear, and tell me all about your dances and your partners," she said. I am quite sure that on its way to Heaven her spirit flew over Galway and lingered a little while. There was a very charming Baron and Baroness de Cosson, he with a wonderful collection of armoury, and beautiful cabinets and boxes. And again there were the International ladies, who were to be kind to me by request of Lady Aberdeen.

We did not wait for the kindness. I had not got over that brief illness, not though Pat had come out, with Barbara Horder who had taken to Florence with a passion that might make up for our inexplicable coldness. Perhaps we never gave Florence a chance. I was not

equal to sight-seeing. One of the last days I tried the Uffizi, but was too tired to see pictures.

Miss Sarah Purser, the artist, had joined us from Dublin. She was very withering about our ways.

"Mrs. Hinkson and Pamela," she said, "you need not have come to Florence for shops; you had much better shops in Bond Street."

"Oh, but I came for chocolate," said Pamela.

"And Mrs. Kerin need not have come from Killiney for Bridge," she went on; "she could have got Bridge in Killiney."

This was unjust; Mrs. Kerin, who had the will to see, had seen Florence with a thoroughness, only playing Bridge in the evenings when the Marchesa must have her table.

CHAPTER XXVI

LEVANTO

IMMEDIATELY after Easter we went to Levanto, on the Italian Riviera. Enthusiastic reports had come back from Pam and Sheila Gwynn, who had been our advance guard, picking up on the way Viola Meynell and her three, who had gone to Rome, spent all their money and been disillusioned.

Now I think of it I might have told Miss Purser that I had come to Italy for Asti Spumante, most delectable of wines, which was to be bought dirt-cheap—something like half a crown a bottle—at the Co-Opperativa in the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele. I had it on all occasions when I could have it; and we had had festas at the Pensione, on Patrick's Day and other days, when we wreathed the chairs of our Die-Hards in yellow, white and green, and drank solemnly to Ireland in Asti.

I remember the Asti Spumante, because Pat and I were the third instalment to move from Florence to Levanto, the others lingering since they much preferred Florence, but were too amiable to send us to the deuce by ourselves. Pat and I had an omelette and a bottle of Asti at the station.

After a long and wretched journey, during which I sat on my hat-case and Pat stood the interminable hours, tortured with toothache, having given up his seat in the earlier train to an Italian woman—to whom no Italian man would have given his seat—we arrived at Levanto.

I had been in terror since we had plunged into the interminable tunnels after Spezia, believing that we were in the wrong train, for I could not remember those

tunnels on the outward way, being perhaps too pleasantly occupied with the party.

Suddenly we leaped out of the last tunnel into dazzling sunshine, and there was the white station with "Levanto" painted above it, and there was the cleanest, freshest, bluest, goldenest place imaginable—white, red-roofed houses, spotless in greenery, against an amphitheatre of mountains, on the lower slopes of which the vines were beginning to burst to leafage. There was the Mediterranean, lapping on sober sands, the white casino, the pink tamarisks standing in long lines. It was too brilliant and too clean for anything outside a picture or the drop-scene of a theatre. And there was the party running to meet us in all the ease of the country and the seaside—loose hair, old clothes, old shoes, and already a tan on their cheeks which Florence had not afforded.

They were wild with delight over Levanto and the Hotel Nazionale, which was really the village inn and an Albergo, not a hotel at all. It was very cheerful outside, being built of red-brick, faced with cream colour, with a steeply sloping roof. Within it consisted of three floors, above the ground floor, all snow-white, with marble floors and long corridors, clean and of an ascetic bareness. The windows at either end of the corridor were usually wide open, and the whole place was full of the sweet sharp air of the mountains and the sea.

Bardellini, the proprietor, was a famous cook. He ran the hotel with the help of his family. Mrs. Bardellini, a depressed-looking woman, was always busy adding to the family, which already numbered thirteen. Isolo, the eighteen-year-old son of the house, was waiter, and his sisters were chambermaids and housemaids. Of course with the 10 per cent. added on all the bills for service Bardellini did uncommonly well.

Levanto shone with colour. From the windows of my bedroom I overlooked the old convent with cloisters which had been turned now to municipal uses, the post-office, the police office, all the civil authorities being

housed there. In the midst of the square enclosure stood a statue of Cavour, which I presume had replaced some Heavenly Person. All was glittering white and red, with the greenery just coming, and for a background the ever-changing colours of the mountains.

The other side of the house looked on the Mediterranean, where on one day of strange light we saw in the distance Corsica hanging like a mirage.

Levanto lived to itself. You had to climb the mountains for nine miles before you struck the road running between Genoa and Spezia. The Strada, by which you came to that road, in time, was one of the amazing triumphs of Italian engineering, the wide road running between the mountain wall and the precipice all the way.

There was a quarry there of Carrara marble. I have seen a block as big as a small room, but solid, dragged on the Strada by four straining mules. I am bound to say their road was down hill, not up—and equally that the straining men helped the straining mules. It was good when Sunday came, for then you knew the mules had a rest.

Levanto from the Strada was most picturesque, with all its varying houses—the Italians wisely abhor uniformity—white and red in the greenery below. The Strada uncoiled itself in many terraces, with slender trees above and below, which, twisted and bowed from wrestling with the wind, set up singly those April days a cresset of green fire.

We found some English visitors at the Albergo. The day after her arrival Pam went foraging for something to read for Sheila Gwynn, who was resting from the fatigue of the journey. She returned highly pleased, with a pile of *The Nation* and *The New Statesman*. She had hoped for nothing better than the Continental *Daily Mail*. These papers belonged to one of the most delightful elderly Englishmen I have ever had the good fortune to meet. Bardellini called him Signor Cocchi; his real name was Cox.

As may be imagined from his choice of literature, Mr. Cox was not the conventional type of Englishman. He was one of the lovable Quixotes who are always out to defend lost causes, the sworn enemy of the bourgeois and the profiteer, very intolerant of all conventional shams and hypocrisies. He was an old Public School and University man. He took very kindly to the party, and nothing could have been more friendly and sympathetic. When we came to know the English Colony, with whom he was never more than on a bowing acquaintance, they said: "But—Mr. Cox! He is so cross always." He was never cross with us.

He was a delightful figure going about Levanto in his old clothes, a thorough cosmopolitan, a rigid idealist in all matters of conduct, a Diogenes to those he did not love, but sweet as Summer to those he did, thoroughly cultivated, shrewd, wise, humorous. It was a great kindness that housed us with Mr. Cox.

When the young people went for mountain-climbing expeditions Mr. Cox introduced me to the more possible excursions. Levanto was not a place for walking. With the exception of the Strada, every hill-road was a river-bed where you went slipping and sliding on the loose stones; and it was a very tight fit if you happened to encounter a string of mules coming down the mountain-side.

It was even worse if you met the mules coming or going—all day long they were coming down from the mountain laden with trees and returning with sacks of polenta—between narrow walls. The mules were packed round with tree-trunks which lacerated their poor sides. The peasants loaded themselves and the mules intolerably. Often we met a woman coming down the river-bed, the stones slipping and sliding from under her feet, carrying a tree-trunk on her head. The muleteers seemed to have no sense about their animals. Once in a very narrow space between high walls, with no chance of retreat, we met the long line of the mules laden with

trees. It was a ticklish thing enough to get by without injury, but when a man began shouting at the mules and they were frightened, it was very nasty indeed.

Sometimes you met a mule on a narrow shelf above a steep descent. There was nothing for it then but to turn and retrace your steps, never knowing how soon the mule would catch up with you.

Once, when we were sitting on a little bridge over a river, a mule suddenly rose up—we had not seen him come—with a little girl riding him. The mule quite filled up the bridge. We had to turn about quickly and squat on the bridge so that he could pass. It was an anxious moment.

Those expeditions with Mr. Cox were a rather fearful joy. I had acquired an unfailing ear for the sound of the mule coming. Mr. Cox used to plug along, singing a small song to himself, as though there was no such thing as a mule in the world. We were always having to climb down, or climb up, to get out of the mule's way, and the mule had a terrible way of coming along, careless or unaware of anything in his path, a perfectly irresistible and irresponsible dumb and blind force coming down upon one.

The poor beast—it is terrible to be born an Italian mule! Do the Italian peasants ever learn any affection for their mules? I doubt it. Once, when a train of mules passed us, in the river-bed this time, the waters of which must have been sweet to their poor feet, a grave and noble-faced contudina, treading the river-bank with us, stooped and picked up a stone, which she hurled at her own particular mule, splashing patiently through the water under his load, going uphill.

One day when there was to be a mountain expedition, an altercation began as soon as the mules arrived. One of the mules, under his saddle, had a sore as big as a dinner-plate. The man who owned the mule was amazed at the unreason of the Inglesi who refused point-blank to ride the mule. He produced a square of cloth, covered

over the sore, and then invited his patrons to reconsider the matter. Since they could not see the sore, why should they mind?

He was got rid of and went off, doubtless cursing the folly of the foreigners. But, at least, one mule on that expedition was fat and well-liking, and seemed to be on good terms with his owner.

They were cutting down the trees everywhere, but at that moment the valley and the mountain-side were full of green fire running upon the slender saplings that were not fit to cut. The vineyards too, on their many terraces, had spurted out in a green shower. There were grey patches of the olive-gardens, and by the cottages there was sometimes a lemon-grove with the pale fruit on the boughs. Down in Levanto the gardens and orchards were all in ordered beauty. I have always found kitchen-gardens among the most beautiful things in the world, and I loved the straight green rows of vegetables under the fruit trees in the Levanto gardens. They had electric light in Levanto, one of the unexpected things. The lights hung like fairy lamps on wires between tall posts. As evening came on it was enchanting to see those mysterious will-o'-the-wisps against the dark of the mountains.

When we came to the Albergo there were other English guests there—"Morning Posters" as Mr. Cox called them. There was an English lady almost as individual and characteristic as Mr. Cox. She went out every day with her sketching-block and paint-box, making delicate little water-colours of the beauties she saw. She was one of the English globe-trotters, who are as different as possible from English trippers—those perfectly intrepid people who launch themselves out alone or accompanied into strange countries and among strange people, without a misgiving. Now *I* am so constituted that to be out of hearing of the English tongue, be it spoken by an Islander or an American, is sheer terror, so I have the greater admiration for such intrepidity.

Oddly enough, we had met this lady's daughter, just before leaving London, at tea at the house of her partner, Dr. Christine Murrell, whom to have as a doctor would make illness worth while. This charming woman gave her visitors the most delicious and richest cakes possible, and a fig for indigestion! But to look at her was to be well.

And here we were sitting down with Dr. Ethel Bones' mamma in the Albergo Nazionale at Levanto! A queer small world!

She and Mr. Cox were very good friends, with a mutual understanding of and respect for each other. They were both good citizens of the world, and highly pleased with the exuberant youth that had suddenly flowed into and flowered at the Albergo.

There was a terrific amount of chatter at the long table in the pleasant dining-room where the party sat. We heard later on that the chatter had seriously disturbed, even distracted, the Barone, who had his meals in an inner room off the dining-room with Mr. Cox, and, at one time, the Morning Posters.

Now the alliance between Mr. Cox and the Barone was a natural and delightful thing, as we knew later, but that there should be any tie at all between the Barone and the Morning Posters, through whom, I believe, in an oblique way, we came to Levanto, was altogether incredible. For the Barone was German, of undoubted lineage, the son of a Spanish mother and a Bavarian father who had been highly distinguished in the affairs of the Fatherland. In fact his name would be quite well known to anyone acquainted with the history of diplomatic relations between the great nations during the last thirty years. The Morning Posters, who were, I am sure, very kindly people, belonged to the class of English people who say they could never forgive the Germans. As a matter of fact I believe the English could forgive anybody. They are not natural haters. But it was intriguing to see the friendship of the Morning

Posters with the Barone, and the bundles of English newspapers which came to him after they went home to England. But now I have a doubt. Supposing they were not really Morning Posters at all? Perhaps it was only a generic title invented by Mr. Cox to describe the good respectable people who annoyed him?

I believe the Barone detested us at first. I can imagine how he denounced us in the inner room, for he was very excitable. I am sure he called the conduct "scendalous," he had an endearing way of putting "e" for the first "a," in a word he used often. There was certainly a good deal of noise at the long table, where Pat was the only male to eleven women, all young except two.

It was not so very long before he came into the salon to be introduced by Mrs. Bone, and after that he was in the life, the very gay and cheerful life that went on in the party. He had been at Levanto for twenty years. For a man of his upbringing and opportunities he might as well have been on a desert island. He had come for a few days and had stayed on, would probably stay till the end, though he was always talking of going back to Germany. It was a dangerous place, Levanto, if you had not some strong lever to drag you away from it into the world. There was an Englishman there who had been a prosperous London business or professional man. He too had come to Levanto for a few days and had never left it.

Rumour had it that he had cut the painter as far as England was concerned: had simply dropped out of the old life into Levanto, a safe enough thing to do, for few English ever came to Levanto. But someone had recognised him, sometime. There was certainly that about Levanto, shut in by the Mediterranean and the mountains, as though the world had come to an end there.

So the Barone became the friend of the party, and for a party of young women I would not ask a more chivalric and faithful friend. He went with them on all

their expeditions. It must have been an extraordinary stirring-up for him. He had always a bustling manner of walking, but now he ran about brisker than ever. Mr. Cox, too. Mrs. Bone said one day before she left: "You have done him so much good; he used to be so silent."

The Barone was always a little alarmed at the freedom of the island girls, but ever ready to stand between them and any possible misunderstanding. He was at their service—to procure them what they wanted, to arrange their expeditions, to be their guide and companion. It must have been a great change from playing dominoes outside the wine-shop for a whole afternoon with one or other of the local aristocrats.

There was an evening when the young ladies had a play. While we were yet at dinner, with the usual accompaniment of chatter and laughter, there arrived a tutor with four boys between sixteen and twenty. The party decided without any proof that they were "backward" boys. After dinner the dressing-up began. All the young ladies were flitting from one room to another in the process of "making up." There was a vast excitement. The "backward" boys could not be kept off the stairs. When they were retrieved by their tutor they hung over the banisters above. I don't believe they were the least bit in the world backward, and I don't think anyone else did. I am sure the tutor thought we were a travelling show. Next morning he and the boys left by the first train. "H'm!" said Mr. Cox, "the backward boys becoming forward, I suppose!"

But it was not until the main body of the party left that we really got to know the Barone. Pat followed the main body after a few days, returning to Cambridge. Mrs. Bone had already gone, with the Killiney member of our party, and Pam and I were alone in the long white corridor where none of the doors locked. I don't know that we were frightened, though we were rather lonely. Now we had only the Barone and Mr. Cox, so

we moved into the inner room for meals and made a little intimate party.

We became really attached to these chance friends. The Barone had a most winning simplicity. He represented the simple, tender, poetic Germany, as unlike as possible to the Prussian hardness and efficiency. He adored the memory of his mother and envied Pat that he had yet his. He had been the most devoted son to his mother, with an absorption which left him helpless and stranded when he lost her—something of a lost child in the world.

I remember how his eyes filled with tears when we talked mother poetry, and he was so rejoiced to know that I knew much of the poetry he loved best. There was that wild ballad of Jean Richepin in which the son, in the thrall of an evil woman, is bidden by her to fetch him his mother's heart to feed her dog. He obeys her, and as he runs with the heart he stumbles and falls. In the Englishing of it by Herbert Trench, the poem ends with :—

> "The heart went crying, so soft and small:
> 'Are you hurt, my child, are you hurt at all?'"

The Barone trembled when we came to that. Any woman, especially any mother, must have loved him for that sensibility.

It seemed a pity that so good a little heart should be in his "collection," which was scattered over Italy and Germany. As the Barone had been an alien enemy during the War his collection had been at the mercy of many petty officials, and more of his *bibelots* had been confiscated than ever went to the State. He used to get very much excited when he talked about those rascals. He had some beautiful things at Levanto. There was an ivory mouse peeling an onion—Chinese carving—which was a miracle. It was lifelike, and the carved back felt to the finger-tips the very coat of the mouse.

I used to chaff him, telling him he should give up the

mouse for his soul's sake, because he loved it so dearly. He said to me one day: "If I were rich I should give you the mouse." That stopped the chaff effectually. I felt as though I had been chaffing a wide-eyed, dignified, well-bred child, whose look was a rebuke. Of course I knew that the Barone could not part willingly with anything of his collection. The things were his wife and children.

We used to discuss religion a great deal—he was a devout Bavarian Catholic. I don't know how he brought me to it, for, like all Irish Catholics, I am quite content with having the Religion, and don't want to talk about it; in which we are diametrically opposed to the English Catholic.

Sometimes he consulted me about getting married—he was in the early fifties. I always advised his getting married, feeling quite sure he never would. He was a confirmed bachelor. He always said I had persuaded him, and went off with a step a little brisker than usual. He usually came back after thinking it over, discouraged.

Once he had been playing dominoes with the Count and had quoted me, and the Count had advised him against marriage.

"There are the children," the Count had said. "They are very expensive, the children."

The Barone was gloomy over the thought of the expensive children.

"But," I asked, "what age are the Count's children?"

"Count Marco, he is forty; Count Antonio, he is forty-five."

I did not like to say that if the Barone married he need not consider the expensiveness of his sons at forty and forty-five.

After the party had gone away we saw something of the hidden gardens and country-houses of Levanto under the Barone's guidance. He was the kindest person, always ready to do anything you wished. After one of those expeditions—it was a hot April Sunday—we were thirsty

and exhausted, so we sat down with the Barone outside a wine-shop in the Piazza and drank the best substitute he could find for Asti. On this occasion Mr. Cox was not of the party. The Barone had a mortal terror about being talked of, more especially among the small English Colony. It was part of his simplicity, for no one could possibly have talked of him in the special sense of the phrase; he was so entirely irreproachable. We quite understood why he elected to sit outside instead of inside the Caffé.

I told him later on that we had met the lady of the English Colony he most dreaded, and that she had shaken her finger at us in playful rebuke, saying: "Oh naughty, naughty! On a Sunday too!" I repented this invention quickly, seeing the anguish of the poor Barone.

I never saw anyone so ill-disposed towards the Morning Post section of his country people as Mr. Cox. He was such a lamb with us. We always went out to tea together at the Casino, and we were on such happy terms that we could sit or walk for long periods of time without ever breaking silence. I don't know that it often happened. But if any persons who could be described at all justly as Morning Posters came into the Casino, Mr. Cox would bristle up like a dear old hedgehog. I think myself he was a terror to the poor people.

When the Barone talked of his friends it was as though he repeated pages of the *Almanach de Gotha*. His autograph book had not a few famous English names. He was anxious to show us some of the wonderful gardens at Genoa. Of one palace garden he told us that the Kaiser, visiting there before the War, had hoped that he might be permitted to repay the hospitality at Berlin.

"But," he added, waving his hand over the garden, "you have everything—I shall have nothing to show you at Berlin."

CHAPTER XXVII

SHIPS THAT PASS

At the Albergo we lived like fighting-cocks, especially after the crowd had departed. Perhaps they had always lived well in the inner room—I mean extra well, for our table had been excellent. Bardellini put forward his best efforts for the inner room, where the Barone was always capable of sending away a course that lacked anything to his mind.

He was the great man of the Albergo and worth pleasing, since he had lived there so long, and would probably live to the end. We had such good food that it made a disgustingly greedy interest in the day. We learned to appreciate Zabaglione and the Genoese dish, Ravioli, which you may get at Pagani's once a week or so. When we wished it the Barone used to order Zabaglione to crown an excellent meal.

It was brilliant weather most of the days—the party had been bathing through April—but the evenings were a little chilly in an Italian house built without reference to cold. The padrone gave us roaring fires, both in the salon and the little dining-room. He used to light them himself, talking a great deal over the performance. Once when the fire was slow to light he tore the wood-basket to shreds and flung them on the pyre. The Barone used to come in if the fire was not lit, rubbing his hands together and saying: "Ach, it is cold! Where is that boy, Isolo? It is scendalous that no fire should be lit. Do you not think so?"

When Mrs. Bardellini presented her husband with a fourteenth child, the Barone's 'Scendalous!" came in gusts. It was indeed very inconsiderate of her.

It was very sad to leave the Barone at the Levanto station one April afternoon; Mr. Cox was with him, but he was coming on next day and we were to pick up his train at Genoa, where we stayed the night. It was profoundly melancholy to say good-bye to the Barone, knowing we would, in all probability, never see him again, and that we were leaving him lonely. But I daresay he had his alleviations, though he was little likely ever to return to Germany, except in dreams.

When we joined the train at Levanto we found the carriage littered with books and papers, but there was no sign of life. We wondered at the careless passengers who had left all their impedimenta behind. Perhaps it was kindness to their successors. We were always newspaper-hungry at Levanto, where posts were very uncertain and there was no chance of buying an English paper. It did not occur to us that the owners of the books and papers were at breakfast, although we had only just had our own, with the first wild strawberries and green peas of the season, and a special wine which was the padrone's parting gift.

The first paper we espied was the *Morning Post*, reclining in a corner seat.

"Hello, Mr. Cox!" we cried, "here's a *Morning Post* for you!" and flung it out to him. He flung it back deftly. We then proceeded to distribute the magazines that lay on the seats. There was a lonely English girl who had come to see us off. We had already given her our spirit stove and kettle. Now she stood enraptured, her arms full of good reading. I then discovered that my fingers were like a chimney-sweep's from having swung myself up to the high train by clutching the door handle, covered with soot from the many tunnels. I stared at them aghast—what was I to do? I could touch nothing without defiling it.

Then I caught sight on the opposite seat of a derelict Continental Bradshaw. Excellent! I cleaned my fingers in most of the leaves; it was not as thorough a

process as I could have wished, but the Continental Bradshaw had certainly relieved me of several ounces of greasy soot.

We were in a great glow of good humour over the fortunate treasure-trove for our friends, when suddenly one of us looked up and beheld in the racks coats and hats. The horrible truth broke upon us. Fortunately there was still time to retrieve the magazines and newspapers. We had barely completed it when the owners began to come in.

An obvious Major took up the *Morning Post*, little knowing how nearly he had lost it. The owner of the Continental Bradshaw, an obvious American with large tortoise-shell-rimmed spectacles, sat down opposite to me. I began to wish that I had thrown out the Bradshaw before the train moved. After all he could not have brought it home to me. He was also the owner of several books and magazines, so that it seemed a sporting chance that we might get to Genoa without his examining his Bradshaw. I am always optimistic. He took up a book by Gilbert Chesterton and started reading it, to my immense relief. I am sure my sigh startled the carriage. But after a while, to my horror, he laid down Gilbert Chesterton and stretched his hand for the Bradshaw. I felt as though I must intervene, imploring him not to touch the wretched volume. I might even have flung it from the window and apologised for a nerve-storm. I did neither. Instead I said hastily, watching his outstretched hand as though it was a snake: "I see you've been reading Chesterton. How do you like him?"

He stared at me—as well as he might.

"I don't like the fellow at all," he said. "He thinks too much of himself."

"Oh, you should know him," I said and went off into an impassioned eulogism of G. K. C., pouring out anecdote after anecdote to distract him from the wretched Bradshaw. Obviously I bored him. Obviously he

thought me a strange, pushing female. Fortunately my age and respectability kept him from thinking me worse than that. But at last, when I paused for breath, his hand seized the Bradshaw. The die was cast. I sat with an open and honest countenance while he looked from page to page of his defiled Bradshaw. I had found it necessary to use most of the myriad leaves.

I kept my eyes on what he was doing with an engaging interest. I very nearly remarked affably:

"Seem to have got your Bradshaw into a mess, haven't you?"

Before I could do that he turned and stared at me: I met his bespectacled, inquiring gaze and went on with Chesterton. He glanced at my hands; they were covered. How could he suspect anything so open and honest as I? But he thought me a desperate bore with my flow of reminiscences about Chesterton. There was a moment when I thought he was going to ask me if I had done it. I started again on Chesterton. The minute he opened his mouth I opened mine. At last he pretended to be asleep.

I knew G. K. C. would be glad to have helped me out of a tight corner, and if that young American, who seemed something of a bookman, should ever read this, he will know what happened to his Bradshaw in the Rome-Paris Express that day of April, 1921. James Stephens, to whom I told this story later, thought he knew that American. He had given the Stephenses a very fine gramophone. I am sure he will never give me one.

At Genoa we lived up to our Florentine reputation. We ate ices and bought filigree. Since then an Irish priest has asked me what I thought of the Genoa Campo Santo. I said I hadn't seen it, and he expressed surprise at my missing it. He turned to an untravelled audience: "Just imagine," he said, "the Campo Santo extends all round the mountains. The catacombs go back into the mountains." He made a motion of his hand as though he included a great space. "Thousands upon thousands

of monuments and vaults! It is a sight beautiful and sublime!"

It was plain that he thought me a Philistine.

The journey next day was uneventful as far as Turin. I should mention that the last thing we acquired on Italian soil was a bottle of Asti Spumante, with some rolls and chocolate, very much against the wishes of Pamela. When she asked who was going to carry the wretched things, I said with dignity that I was. But I wasn't.

At Turin we were seized upon by a heaven-directed porter, who, having deposited us in a carriage for Dames Seules, with all our belongings, suddenly changed his mind and rushed us with wild whoops into an adjoining carriage. There was no apparent reason for the change, but we were beyond objecting, especially with the terror of Modane in front of us.

I heard Pamela catch her breath and murmur something about a Turk. There was a slim youth in Eastern dress who had an evident desire to block our way. Beyond him was a long lean young man, very dark, and the darker for being grimy, humped in a corner apparently half-asleep.

We had not the energy to fly back to our Dames Seules from the Turk and the Italian. The windows were shut. Pamela made an effort to open one. The young man on the seat got up and did it for her. She was too spent to wonder why an Italian should render her such a service.

As she dropped into her seat she said: "Grazie, Signor."

The Italian said: "O Good Lord!"

She said: I'm sorry!"

He responded sadly: "I'm not surprised. I feel like an Italian."

He was a young cavalry officer coming home from Mesopotamia, with an Arab servant who had secreted himself on the boat so that he might not be separated

from his Sahib. He had been very unwilling that women should enter the carriage with his Sahib.

We had been rather dreading that journey. Modane, even with a Embassy pass, had been a triumph of military insolence. Modane without an Embassy pass, and with a porters' strike at Turin just ended, was safe to be a terror. The American young man in the train had told me that the American Ambassador in England had advised Americans not to travel by Modane. We were just trusting, with fearful hearts, and I am perfectly certain that the strange porter at Turin was sent in answer to our trust.

We were not long on the way from Turin when our heaven-sent friend asked if he and his Arab might take charge of us and our luggage through Modane, and as far as we went together homewards. We assented with becoming dignity, as though we had not foreseen it. The Arab was a delightfully picturesque creature. He was very much down on his luck because his Sahib had met with a serious loss the night before, having been followed, apparently, from Venice by train-robbers, who managed to get off with what they came for. The Arab was not in charge at the moment, but he had taken the loss so much to heart that he had refused to eat.

He was beautiful to look at, and I am sure he was the cleanest thing in the train. A slender, brown boy, with delicate features and enormous eyes, he looked the one unbegrimed human being there.

His master, I must say, carried his very serious loss with amazing cheerfulness. Perhaps he had not yet had time to realise it fully: he had already had a night in the train and he had had no opportunity to recover from Mesopotamia; also he had been seriously wounded in the War.

Between Turin and Modane we saw the first matchless beauty we had seen since coming out. The train was running through the Alps. It was a beautiful sunny

afternoon, yet above the high mountains there was an ominous sky of storm. The eternal snows lay peak over peak, soft as thistledown, taking the most wonderful colours from the sun.

The mountains were cultivated some little way up. The valley was dotted here and there with slender trees, and the same trees climbed the slopes of the mountains. It was the moment of the year, and the valley was full of green flame. There were slender cressets of flame against the dark sides of the mountains where the vines had come out in leaf.

By the side of the train the little river ran. Even through the roar and rattle of the train you could hear it laughing and shouting, for the snows had begun to melt into it.

The scene was of a quite incredible, extravagant beauty. The valley flamed from end to end with the green fire, such green as words cannot describe: only God could have thought of it. The contrast with the deep purple of the mountains and the brooding sky was beautiful beyond words. At the foot of the immense hills the villages and stations and the church spire were like toys.

The Arab fixed his eyes on this marvel and they gleamed in the depths of their amber and brown. The man new from Mesopotamia could hardly endure this intoxicating beauty. The train stopped at many little stations as though it was not the Rome-Paris Express, but a small local train. Every time it stopped our new friend jumped out and could not be detached from staring at the beauty till the train began to move again. Several times we thought we must lose him.

Another ex-soldier came into the carriage. He was on his way from Egypt to Dublin, and the two had met at Taranto and travelled together. His name was McCarthy. It was a talisman.

Our first friend listened to our conversation in amazement. Being Irish we talked of politics and religion.

"Good Lord!" he said, turning to the Irishman—"Are you a rebel too?"

"*Rather!* We all are!"

The young Englishman gave it up. At Turin we had seen the American carrying the Continental Bradshaw. He had lifted his hat, rather coldly. Was it possible he suspected *me?*

We saw him again at Modane, which was like the Black Hole of Calcutta on a large scale. Never had I imagined such indignities heaped upon inoffensive people by slave-drivers and torturers. For three mortal hours we were driven hither and thither, in a tightly-wedged mass of hapless human beings, screaming, fainting, weeping, swearing, while the *douaniers*, like devils who delighted in the sufferings of their victims, stood behind an enclosure enjoying themselves hugely.

If it had not been for the Mesopotamian young man I should not now be living to tell the tale. The young American called out something to me about what his Government would do. I suppose he had forgotten about the Bradshaw in our companionship of suffering. The Englishmen were furiously angry—all except our young man, who never for a moment lost his temper, while he was trying to make people keep the queue, and to protect one poor woman who was much in need of protection, from being knocked down and trampled by the crowd.

I was comfortably in his wake, and he had a nice broad back. The poor woman, an Italian, was clinging to his arm. The Arab, loaded up with our small parcels, was watching Pamela like a dog, preventing her pocket being picked. Since his Sahib had taken us under his protection, that was enough for him. He was our watch-dog.

The place was full of mean whites, beyond the *douaniers*. Every few minutes there was an altercation between one of them and the Arab. The spectacle of the undersized Italians in a venomous fury gnashing their teeth at the slender son of the desert was a strange one. Every

second we thought blood must be spilt. The Arab's master would glance back over his shoulder, call out something in Arabic, and the Arab would be immediately composed, wrapped round once more in the mystery and aloofness of the East as in a garment. One wondered what he thought of the white men who had hitherto been lords to him.

We emerged at last from the hell of the *douane* to find all the first-class carriages choked. The train was due to start. There was no time for food. By this time we had decided that our young man was like Bulldog Drummond, Gerald du Maurier's Bulldog Drummond, in that jolly, absurd melodrama.

He got me into a second-class carriage, while Pamela and the Arab stood by the luggage, which no one had thought of putting in. There was not a seat. I caught sight of my American: he showed no sign of budging. Why should he, indeed?

Our protector acted with the decision and resource of Bulldog Drummond. He passed over a Frenchman who was being rather nasty, and his eye picked out two English schoolboys.

He beckoned to one of them.

"I want your seat for this lady," he said. And to the other boy: "I shall want your seat for another lady who is coming."

"Yes, sir," said the boys obediently, and walked out into the corridor.

Mr. McCarthy appeared next with two pillows which he had secured for us. He also thought he had secured less congested quarters, which proved to be true, for a dear little French girl had broken down the opposition of her compatriots who, after the manner of railway travellers, wanted a carriage to themselves.

Pamela meanwhile was standing by the luggage, which, after all the prodigious fuss, had not even been looked at.

"What becomes of the luggage if it is not examined?" she asked a *douanier*, and was told that it rested there.

She turned and looked at the grinning circle of torturers, and she said something.

She says herself that it was: "*Nom d'un pipe!*"

Whatever it was it was the talisman, for they ceased to be malign mockers and became men, roaring with laughter, while they got a move on with the luggage.

I was in a dreadful certainty that she would be left behind. All these things are more dreadful when one is almost blind, and can do nothing but stay helplessly where one is placed. I have laughed about the journey, but there was real terror in the anticipation of it, and there would have been overwhelming terror if the Giver of all Kindness had not put it in someone's heart to be kind.

We had no food between lunch in the train from Genoa and lunch the next day at Paris. When that came, after the twenty-four hours' fast, we were incapable of eating. It was certainly an ill-managed journey.

We had improvidentially drunk the Asti with our travelling friends before we reached Modane. We had a terrible night with a Frenchwoman who had a peculiarly malignant cold—which she well deserved—and insisted on keeping the windows shut. We compromised by keeping the door open into the corridor, where was a window open. It was a contest through the hours of the night, she sending her daughter to shut the corridor window, we opening it.

At four o'clock in the morning, when we were all dead-asleep, she suddenly insisted on closing the carriage-door. It was her right, she said, and I suppose it was, legally. There were six of us in the carriage and the woman had a poisonous cold, as we knew later to our cost.

We left the carriage to her and prepared to spend what remained of the night in the corridor. Then the poor young man woke up and gathered us in again. He had compromised by giving the woman his rug. She was already buried in rugs. And he had the thin blood which comes to the white man from sojourn in the

East! One wondered how any woman could have taken it, but she did.

The rest is a series of uncomfortable phantasmagoria. The train stopped once or twice at a small station where chocolate was to be had, but there was not enough to go round the immensely crowded train. It seemed so cruel to wake the poor young man from his cold uncomfortable sleep, in which he had the strange death-like look I had seen in other tired young soldiers coming home on leave during the War, a look which used to make one's heart sink like a plummet lest they be predestined.

He was always up, though half-drugged with sleep, and rushing the long way to the buffet; but we never succeeded in getting anything.

We were very sorry spectacles when we got to Paris, I am sure. The Arab—who had lain like a dog on the floor of the corridor; having occasional altercations, in which the words were all on one side, with excitable French ticket-collectors, and with people who walked on and cursed him—had not lost anything of the strange inscrutable dignity, though his eyes were very sick. I don't suppose the rest of us carried it off so well.

Denis Gwynn and Mrs. Victor Rickard had come to meet the helpless travellers at the Gare de Lyon. They found two white men and an Arab in charge of us and our luggage.

"But," asked Denis Gwynn, when he got a chance, "who are they?"

"We don't know," we answered faintly.

I thought I had a mortal sickness in the Paris-Boulogne train—luckily we had missed the Calais train, for we had a luxurious amount of room in the other—but it was only fatigue and the long fast. I have always deplored my lost opportunity, for we travelled with a famous man-milliner of Paris who was very affable and confiding. What an article I could have made of it. But I only heard his voice faint and faraway.

We had the boat almost to ourselves and the train from

Folkestone. Our kind fellow-traveller never left us till he and the Arab carried up our luggage at the London hotel, a small private (real, this time) hotel, whose guests kept very regular hours, so that there was no night-porter, and our late arrival, with two extra guests, one an Arab, caused quite a commotion.

CHAPTER XXVIII

HOME-COMING

We spent three weeks after that between London and Sussex, where we stayed a week with the Meynells and the darling grandchildren. Everard's little son fell passionately in love with Pamela, whom he thought very beautiful. He was much perturbed because on our first coming we had surprised him in a state of grubbiness.

"Did you see a very dirty little boy's face looking at you from the window?" he asked Pamela anxiously, and he was of a shining cleanliness as he asked it.

We were below par during those three weeks, and we were sick to get home, but there were engagements we had to keep. London was already growing hot and the rooms in the hotel were toy rooms. We were so much below par that I can remember a day when, strolling across to the Park from the Lyceum, and finding secluded seats, we both fell fast asleep. We were thoroughly tired out.

We had some pleasant occasions. I talked at the Irish Literary Society one Saturday and met all my warm, friendly compatriots whom it is always a happiness to meet in London. We lunched with Colonel and Mrs. Aubrey Herbert one day in Bruton Street; the Desmond McCarthys were there and Lady Edward Grosvenor, and the talk was altogether Irish. Mrs. Herbert looked like Ireland as we see her and love her; and there was a day when Lady de Vesci—and there are no more beautiful women in Ireland nor greater lovers of Ireland than this mother and daughter—took Pamela to a show, while I was otherwise engaged, and among the guests at lunch

was Lady Betty Balfour, who was also of the circle that talked of Ireland.

But London was very dull, and many of the engagements which had kept us there those three weeks fell through after all because the big Coal Strike was on, and people stayed away from London. London was most depressing to one who remembered the gaiety and freshness of May in London in pre-War days. I have only to close my eyes to see the lightness of the West End Streets, all furbished for the season, the gay window-boxes making brilliant colour against the new painted house-fronts. Indeed this strange beauty which used to come to London in May was not confined to the West End. I can remember the country-wind blowing into the streets, and the stacks of Spring-flowers by the kerbs and walls, and the watering-carts out making a pleasant coolness, and the jingle of the hansom-bells, and the high-stepping carriage-horses going by in their pride with all the harness glittering and shaking.

May morning in a London street, and one side all bright sunshine, and the other in deep shadow! The hansom-horses with a flower at their ears, and the drivers with a rose in their coats! Why, now I think of it, the pubs made the gayest show of all with the window-boxes! There used to be a fringe of colour hanging from the window-sills and everywhere there was a little square a tree was out in beauty. There were young and beautiful people and old and beautiful people then. London was a poem and a picture in those Mays long ago: she had washed herself in May-dew to a morning freshness.

But the May of 1921! The West End streets through which I went northward from the Lyceum showed little but shuttered houses, the dust and cobwebs on the windows. Torn paper fluttered in the dusty streets. Many of the houses had changed hands. Now and again we heard this and that transfer talked of when we sat at the tables of those for whom the Revolution was being accomplished or had been accomplished.

The shops were stocked with goods, but the purchasers had not come. The people in the shops lamented the delayed Season. They had not yet come to realise that the Revolution had been accomplished in England, and that the London Season as it had been would never be again. The Revolution was accomplished so silently because those whom it most affected had it as an essential article of their code that such things should be borne in silence.

They did things otherwise in France, where the aristocrats went in tumbrils to the guillotine. In England it was only that Mr. Selfridge went to Lansdowne House.

The last night we were in London we dined at the Lyceum with the Agricultural Circle. We had taken a room at the Euston Hotel for the night. We had slept for five nights, and packed nine trunks, in a room not much bigger than the cabin of a boat, which was ventilated by portholes to carry out the comparison. London was getting hotter every day, and we were dead-sick of tiny rooms, where one could hardly breathe at night, and cross little London servants, who, I suppose, were overdriven themselves. I chose to stay that last night at the Euston for the sake of sleeping in a big room, and we had a lovely room—acres of it; and dear Mr. Jones came specially to Euston to bespeak the kindness of the new Station-Master for us, looking more like a dear old rose than ever. To walk along the platform with him was as though one walked with a Field-Marshal, for all the saluting there was.

At the Lyceum dinner I sat by an Irishman, Mr. Percival, who had taken me down to dinner; on the other side was an English M.P. The great body of the guests I did not know much about.

I was a Hostess and was to speak. Mr. Percival and I talked Ireland all the time and the things that were happening in Ireland. We were very much rejoiced to be getting home, and I had been happy all day, feeling

that it was always worth while to be homesick away from Ireland for the joy of going back: as I used to think it worth while living in London for the passionate joy with which one went to the country.

I knew I was going to speak, and I knew I should be expected to be amusing. Well, quite suddenly I experienced the strangest desolation. I might almost say that the lights burnt blue. I know that I saw the lights and the flowers and the faces of the guests through a mist.

"When I forget thee, O Jerusalem!" The cry of the Psalmist echoed lonely in my heart. To think that my country was in her agony and that I was expected to amuse these kind friendly English people, who would begin to laugh the minute I opened my mouth, because I had a brogue!

If I had stood up and said: "My country is dying," they would have laughed, thinking it was meant humorously—or I thought they would. There were good Irish there and good friends of Ireland, but I had gone out into the desert. What did I do there, "in a foreign land, in a lonesome city"? I turned to the Irishman beside me, and I said something to him, and he understood; but all that went on afterwards was just a phantasmagoria, through which spectres moved.

I made my speech and I heard the laughter and applause. One of the guests was speaking of me in terms of a surprising kindness. It all seemed far away and very sad. I did not know who he was, nor how he should know anything about me, nor why he should praise me. But as we went out a warm hand grasped mine. I looked up at a big man whom I was too blind to recognise as that kind and friendly speaker. He held my hand in his and patted it.

"The Irish are the best people in the world," he said. "My Irish boys were the best boys I ever had to do with. And they are being driven mad. Do you think I don't feel with you?"

It was Sir John Cockburn, who had been Premier and many other things of South Australia. It was exactly as though he knew that strange experience of mine.

Some time during the Winter, Mr. Carlisle, the old Ulster Liberal, had stood up in the gallery of the House of Lords when the Better Government of Ireland Bill (otherwise the Coercion Bill) was under discussion.

"My Lords," he had said, "you may kill England by this Bill; you will never kill Ireland."

He got in this notable pronouncement before he was removed from the sacred precincts.

We had been very enthusiastic about it to Lord Linlithgow, who had been present in the House of Lords on the occasion. He had said with the cynical humour which covers a heart easily touched:

"My dear Mrs. Hinkson, the Lords was not the right emotional atmosphere for such a thing. They all looked away, behaving exactly as the people at a dinner-table do when a lady drops her false teeth, talking away furiously and pretending not to be aware of the incident." But I think this was an incident the Irish will not forget.

We arrived at Kingstown, or Dun Laoghaire, after a very unadventurous journey, next evening. The great Summer was by this time well-established, and, as we approached the Irish coast, that lovely vista of cliff and mountain and indented bays with houses to the water's edge and scattered over the hills, was at its most beautiful. It lay in the light of the golden afternoon—pale gold: in the wonderful Summer of 1921 gold was your only wear, and it persists now into November; but it is guinea gold now with the fine coinage tinkling on every tree.

There was something extraordinarily mild and sweet about the pale gold country lying there before us. Was it possible that it was in the throes of a violent revolution, that fearful things were happening there, that the country was bleeding to death?

None of our friends had told us a word of what was happening: people in Ireland were using letter-writing as they were using speech, to conceal their thoughts; and their correspondents in England were equally reticent. The letters were being read by one side and another, and one looked a good many times at anything that could possibly be misunderstood before writing or sending it. Sometimes over a London fire or in the corner of a London club-room one heard wild and terrible tales from someone just newly come from Ireland, or someone who had met someone newly come from Ireland. But I shall not tell them here. The moment is not ripe for that.

My own experiences in Ireland were not terrible ones. Of course, during the seven months of absence we had missed the worst, for although the Reign of Terror was still at its full height in May, at least the days were long and sunny, and terror must always be more terrible in the long dark.

In England, with the flare head-lines on the papers and the tales whispered from one to another, one had received the impression of unrelieved tragedy. True there had been the magnanimities of the struggle, the great magnanimities between soldiers which broke the heart while they uplifted it. I do not believe that the I.R.A. hated the soldiers or the soldiers them. It is always the non-combatants who are bitter.

One was always hearing of those magnanimities from one side to another, without which the situation would have been intolerable. Some day I hope to treat of these and of the wild stories that were told us from time to time. In a book like this, where so much is gay, one feels that there would be an incongruity, even if the time were ripe.

From our friends in Ireland we had not heard one hint of laughter during those seven months. It might well be that laughter in Ireland was dead. But we might have known better. We might have known that nothing

would kill laughter in Ireland. It is the blessed heritage of a brave people, the living light which has survived all the black centuries of Irish wrong and suffering.

We came to the beloved shores. I felt that I hardly dared to speak above my breath. What dark shadow lay over those golden hills, hidden and unsuspected in the pure light?

I looked for menacing Black-and-Tans on the boat-pier as we landed. There was not one. There was no trace of military occupation. There were the voices, the speech, the Irish ways that used to fill us with delight and laughter when we returned to Ireland after a long absence.

"Rarely, rarely comest thou, Spirit of Delight,"

was written by an Englishman. The absence of the Spirit of Delight is the rare thing in Ireland.

The porters were collecting the luggage.

"Mick, will ye gi' me a hand here wid Mr. Byrne's suit-case?"

"Glory be, Pat, don't be puttin' that oul' hamper a-top o' Mrs. Kelly's hat-box!"

There was the human touch, the thing you so seldom get outside Ireland. It was unchanged, unchangeable; but at first one hardly believed that there was not black tragedy behind it all, just kept out of sight, like the things that really mattered in one's correspondence from Ireland.

My faithful Pamela had found the cab we had ordered, and deposited me in it while she went to collect the luggage. Before we left the pier I had caught sight of a solitary little soldier in the sentry-box at the end of the pier, playing with a fox-terrier. My cab sat under the lee of a military lorry. It was quite inactive, but it was the first reminder of the military occupation.

The cabman, an old friend, was reading an evening paper unconcernedly after welcoming me home. He lowered it to say "I hope ye won't mind, ma'am, goin'

round be Cabinteely, because the trees are down on the road."

"Why are the trees down on the road?" I asked, in a whisper.

"Ah, sure, the boys do be amusin' themselves."

I glanced at the paper he held. Conscious of the neighbouring lorry I scarcely dared to speak above my breath. I expected to see the terrible flare-headlines.

"Is there anything in the paper?" I asked.

"There's all the winners at Leopardstown. Would you like a look, ma'am?"

He handed me the paper. I had no mind to read it.

"Are things very bad?" I asked.

"Ah, not at all."

Of course it might have been camouflage.

We started off. Soon we were free of the houses and in the shining beautiful country which lies back of the townships. Fresh from Italy we thought Italy had nothing so beautiful, excepting only that Alpine Valley at its moment. The Irish country was so gentle in its first delicate green, the long level rays of the golden sun falling over fields of young corn, pastures with grazing cattle and lambs and sheep, the lovely long line of the mountains, dimly blue, keeping the lovely land.

There was not a sign of the Terror. Young ladies on bicycles, with tennis racquets under their arms, passed us by. We saw the players moving quietly over the golf-links. The birds were singing as they never sang before—and the blackbird was king of the birds. I never knew before how full and rich was the Irish choir. At Greatham we had listened for the nightingales, and it was a new and a poor song, hardly recognisable for the nightingale's, as though the War which had killed the young had broken the English nightingale's song.

It was just like the Irish birds to keep that merry mad feast of song in the time of trouble, like the hearts of the Irish.

We were new-come from songless Italy. I had asked someone in Florence where I should hear the Italian nightingales, which I had always been told made the music of the poets, of Keats and Mrs. Browning and Shakespeare and all the choir. When I had been thrilled by the song of the English nightingale in pre-War England I had been told: "Oh, but you should hear the Italian nightingale!"

The person of whom I asked the question in Florence had said: "Nightingales? but—they are all eaten."

We had found Italy entirely silent of bird-song. Once or twice in the country about Levanto I had heard the frightened twitter of a solitary bird caught in those unkind valleys, and evidently with some premonition of its fate. Once an English girl told me that she had heard a nightingale singing in the graveyard of the Frate. I hope St. Francis extended his cloak over that Little Brother.

The heart of St. Francis must be wrung in Heaven if he is permitted to see Italy. Once I came upon a group of beautiful little girls, seated on roadside grass. They were like pansies or peaches, and they were chattering like morning birds. I felt rather than saw Pamela's quick shudder and looked for the cause. Near them on the grass were lying a number of piteous little lambs, trussed so tightly that only their imploring eyes could move. For the slaughter presumably. The Barone had said to me: "Do not let your daughter see the cart as it passes with the lambs for the slaughter, the poor little heads hanging over the side, banging with every motion of the cart. Ach—it is scendalous!" But she had seen it.

And here was the Irish blackbird whistling so loudly that we stopped the cab, *en route*, thinking some of the luggage had fallen off and that someone was whistling to let us know.

"Sure it's only the blackbirds!" the cabman said, grinning. "Yez haven't forgotten the blackbirds, surely!"

I suppose he was thinking of the old story of the man who went to Liverpool for a week and when he came back to Ireland did not know the cat. "What do you call the cock-eared beggar sitting by the fire?" he was reported to have said.

Well, I had known the Irish blackbird all my days. I had heard him singing "Harvey Duff" on many a dewy May evening, when the singing of that air, which had a provocative effect on the police, was prohibited by law; but the blackbird whistled it all the same. I had never before heard such a riot of bird-song, with the blackbird and the thrush for leaders of the choir. But now it was "Now cheer up! Now cheer up!" the blackbird was singing with chuckles of enjoyment.

The cab pulled up and the cabman asked a bread-van driver—

"Is there any trees down on the road?"

"There's wan beyant the church, but ye'll aisy get by."

It was a big tree and the cabman prepared to pass it by driving the heavily laden cab up on to the path. We lit down before taking that passage perilous. In the midst of the tree, like two little Jacks-in-the-Green, were perched two small boys, almost hidden by the lovely foliage.

"That's a queer place for a tree to be," we said.

"Sure that's the way the trees do be growin' in Ireland now," one answered cheerfully.

We got home without further adventure to the little place still in all its spring beauty. As the cabman passed through the green door into the paradise beyond and dumped a trunk he said:

"This is a lovely little place yez have here."

"It is," said I.

"All the same I wouldn't live in it for di'monds," said he.

"Why not?" I asked.

"Ah, sure, I'd be wantin' to hop on the tram an' get

down to the picture-house at Dalkey," he said, "or maybe wance or twict a week I'd be nippin' in to the second house at the Empire or Tivoli. I'm all for divarsion."

This was our home-coming to Ireland of the Sorrows.

CHAPTER XXIX

DANGEROUS DAYS

It was heavenly to have the sweet little house to ourselves. The sensible happiness of that, after "climbing up and down another's stairs" and living with strangers, lasted long enough. Indeed I am not sure that it does not yet last. Very soon the roses were clustering tight round the windows, now and again coming inside in a long trail accompanied by the honeysuckle. Our nights were deep and quiet then and our days like honey, despite the Terror.

Our old servants were still away in uncongenial "places," and we had Annie from the village, once more. We were hardly aware of Annie's presence in the house, so quiet was she. But they had had a Winter of alarms. As Captain of the Cum-na-Bhan she had been the object of many raids. During the Winter she had been doing some sewing for me and one of her letters to me had run in this way:

"I am sure you will be interested to hear that your nightdress was in the hands of the Black-and-Tans when they raided us early last Sunday morning. They came at 12 o'clock and remained until 1.30. There were about thirty of them and they only raided our place. They went through everything, looking behind pictures, etc., but they found nothing. I was sure they would arrest my brothers, as they made them dress themselves ready for the road. They ordered one of my brothers to sing 'God Save the King,' but he did not know it. I thought they were going to bob me before they left. I was the first they asked for when they came in. My

mother is very much upset, especially when night comes."

I match this with a livelier narrative which had reached me at Christmas, 1920, from a sprightly young Dublin lady. There was going to be a wedding at her house.

"The family is in a perfect tumult. Yesterday the pipes burst and the house was flooded most awfully and we all had to swim for our lives. A good deal of M . . .'s trousseau was drowned and we have been picking up corpses of mice all day. It was most amusing here on Christmas Eve when the Army of Occupation came out to do its Christmas shopping. They arrived in Grafton Street on huge lorries, acommpanied by armoured cars, tanks, machine guns, barbed wire, airreoplanes and hostages. They then began to buy amorous cards, small crêpe-de-Chine handkerchiefs by the hundred, and an occasional Teddy bear or pink sugar mouse. All these things were duly packed into the lorries, and just as the bills were beginning to be made up, cries of Ambush! Treason!! Felony!!! were raised, and they departed leaving the shop-assistants somewhat amazed."

The days were filled with terrible and gay happenings. I only realised how sad our absence had been by the gaiety of the people, against which the Terror was powerless. We laughed more during the weeks following our home-coming than we had laughed all those seven secure months; and it was not a soulless laughter: it was just the brave merry hearts of the people that saved the whole terrible situation.

There was a story Willie Yeats loved in his boyhood of St. Columkille and his mother. The Saint's mother was ill: "How are you to-day, Mother?" he asked.

"Worse, my son."

"May you be worse to-morrow."

The same report and the same unfilial answer were repeated for many days, and the invalid's condition was not improving. So after a time she began to consider matters and thought well of varying her answer.

"How are you to-day, Mother?"

"Better, my son!"

"May you be better to-morrow."

After this the patient's condition began to improve, and improved daily with the cheerful answer till she was well again.

I tell this story to point the moral that the merry heart lives while the sad one dies. Perhaps indeed the sense of humour common to the race lies at the bottom of the unconquerable vitality of the Irish.

The situation was extraordinary. The civilian was absolutely at the mercy of the man with the revolver, unprotected as he or she can hardly have been in any country possessing any form of Government. All the network of protection had disappeared. There were no police. The Volunteer police, who had been operating, and operating well, before we went away, were now interned or on the run or dead. The civilian was not allowed firearms; if he had them it would be only an added danger. None of your neighbours would come to your assistance if you were in need of it; the odds were too great. Your watch-dog would be shot down, so it was no use keeping a watch-dog.

They might come any time. The wisest thing was not to annoy them when they came, so we sat with doors and windows wide-open during the long silent twilight up to midnight.

In London I had amused people by saying: "I am not afraid of the I.R.A. or the Black-and-Tans. What I am afraid of is the Sons of Dawn."

By the last picturesque name the mean banditti who used the trouble in the country as a cover for their nefarious purposes had called themselves. The bigger ones of the profession were robbing banks and mail-cars and post-offices and bank-messengers. The smaller were knocking down women on the road and taking their handbags, or visiting lonely farmhouses where one old man lived, or cottages where a woman and children

offered no resistance. Those scoundrels demanded money with threats in the name of the I.R.A. I am glad to believe that when they got into the hands of the real I.R.A. their punishment was salutary.

Someone said to me in the early Summer of 1921 that these small banditti were less in evidence. The terror of the Black-and-Tans had driven them off the roads at night—which was something to the credit of the Black-and-Tans.

An extract from a letter which had been forwarded to me in Italy in March will throw some light on the methods of these evil-doers.

It bore an address in the Irish Midlands :

". . . Things grow steadily worse in our poor country. I heard to-day that the Sinn Feiners in other parts of Ireland call this 'New England,' because it is so quiet, so now they are enlivening it. On Monday, when the postman was not far from here, seven masked and revolvered men got over a stile and emptied his bag of all save his lunch. On Wednesday night trenches were made on many roads.

"The door of the A . . . letter-box was broken one night and the Post-Office does not seem to mean to mend it—it is a great inconvience.

"Sir H—— P—— gave a hall in B—— for a Sinn Fein Court of Arbitration to be held in, and was pleased at the justice, etc. It was rumoured that he had been arrested : then it was said that he was not arrested, but had to appear before a high tribunal in London, and had to pay one thousand pounds before he 'got out of it.'"

There was a postscript : "I have just heard that the many raidings of the mail-car between R—— and B—— were done by the driver, an ex-soldier ! He is now in jail ; the plunder was found in his house, and his wife has been wearing a fur coat of Lady C——'s, and as an old woman told us yesterday, 'has the corners of it wore out.' She is now arrested. I suspect our new postman

raided himself too, and that the seven masked men are his airy imaginings."

The curious thing was that we were not at all afraid at night, or hardly afraid, in the little house, which could not stand a siege for one moment. Indeed the civilian's home was so little his castle that a knock at the door at night would send everyone scurrying to open it, so that *they* should not be ruffled by being kept waiting.

Our female friends always slept with a dressing-gown and slippers handy, as they never knew the moment when they might be needed. One of our friends received one night a party of Auxiliaries. There were only women in the house. "Have you a man here?" asked the spokesman of the party. "No," she said mildly, "I wish I had."

The Auxiliaries, being a corps composed entirely of ex-officers, did not at all like being mixed up with the Black-and-Tans. They found nothing on this occasion, and they behaved perfectly well. Before they left the one who seemed to be in charge asked my friend gloomily if she understood that they were Auxiliaries. She said, yes. He said: "Have you ever heard us called by any other name?" She said "I think not." He said: "Have you ever heard us called Black-and-Tans?" She, doubtfully: "I don't think so." He—"Have you ever heard of the Black-and-Tans?" She—"I think I have heard the name." He, going off, "Well, please remember that we are Auxiliaries, and not Black-and-Tans."

The very strange thing of that time was the silence of the country, not only within Curfew hours, but as the time approached Curfew. Curfew was at ten for our part of the country, but it was nine o'clock in Dublin, and by eight o'clock everything on wheels was off the road. Now eight o'clock Summer-Time with the extra half-hour we lost when our clocks were made uniform with Greenwich Time, was only half-past six, sun-time. Anything more uncanny than that golden

silent world I have never seen. It had the strange unreality of the early morning. The cattle grazing in the fields and the sheep on the mountain-side might have been painted. It was a still-life world, and all Nature acquiesced in the silence, excepting only the Blackbird.

The pale beautiful twilight lasted till near midnight and we seldom went to bed before then. Sometimes, in the night, the head-lights of a lorry flashed on the wall by your bed and seemed to discover you on your pillows. There was a terror about those lights, for, of course, nothing else was abroad except military or police-lorries out raiding.

Morning after morning you waked to a golden day; but the country was still under the silence. Not a creak of a little cart went by the road to fair or market. The milkers, who usually were astir at daybreak, with a great procession of barking dogs after their cart, now lay a-bed till six. One imagined all the people creeping into their darkened houses at night and listening to the silence, which can have a strange and terrible portent beyond that of noises.

Outside Curfew hours life went on much as usual. People had learnt to adjust their lives to the altered conditions so that they should irk as little as possible. If they danced they did it within Curfew hours, and went home with the milk in the morning.

One day Pamela went to sell at a charity fête. Business was not brisk. There were a great many young ladies selling, but there were few buyers. It was the slack hour of the afternoon, and saleswomen were growing rather gloomy, since the evening sale, which is generally the harvest of such things, was knocked off by the Curfew.

Suddenly there was a stir. A lorry-load of Auxiliaries drove up to the gate in a Crossley tender with an armoured car escort, and dismounted. You can imagine the excitement of the young ladies—a fearful excitement.

"Oh, come you in peace or come you in war?"

It was soon evident that they came in peace. They had pocketsful of money, the one thing to be desired on such occasions, and they bought lavishly, and never grumbled at the exorbitant prices. The trays of chocolate, which had been melting in the sun's rays, disappeared like magic. The visitors cleared the stalls. Then they romped with the children; they played croquet, each with a loaded revolver stuck in his stocking; they crowded the fortune-teller's tent; they did all the approved things. Finally they button-holed young ladies, mostly far from sympathetic, and poured into their ears the tale of their loneliness and their being misunderstood. They promised to come next day and bring new buyers, and went off finally leaving the young ladies divided between their instincts as saleswomen and their dread of such buyers. But the next day, though prodigious new stocks of chocolate were ready for their consumption, they did not come. It was wiser not to appear in the same place twice running.

It became quite easy to take the dangers as in the day's work. We were only home a few days when we were asked to an afternoon party at the house of Willie Yeats's sisters. It was a monthly event. From us the Yeatses' house lies the other side of the mountains—an indication of locality which greatly pleased a London friend who came later in the Summer. She thought it lovely to be able to say that your friends lived the other side of the mountains; but then she was in love with Ireland.

The roads were trenched in many places, and you never knew where you would find a bridge trenched or a road blocked by trees. Luckily there was hardly any dark then, and what there was no one was out in.

We had to cross a river near Dublin. As we approached the first bridge we slowed down. There was something that looked like a furrow on the bridge; it was trenched deeply.

While the car was backing a young pink-cheeked Dublin

Metropolitan constable came up to talk to us. He was very different from the haughty D.M.P. I remembered. His manner was sad. There was a time when the D.M.P. trod earth like a superman.

He told us sorrowfully that he thought we could get through by way of the other bridge. A solid wall of masonry had been built across it one or two nights before, but some of the wall had been taken down.

Our driver manœuvred the car through the breach in the wall. The bridge was strewn with the débris of the wall, blocks of stone lying scattered in every direction.

At the tea-party, which was crowded with the Dublin artists and intellectuals, you caught strange scraps of conversation.

On one side a pleasant-faced lady was saying: "When my poor little girl was brought home to me dead, and she two hours before full of life and spirits. . . ." She was the head of a Women's College and one of her students had been shot a few days earlier while looking on at a Cricket Match between the Military and Trinity College. A Professor at the other side was saying: "There had been a lot of disturbances but I had got through what I had to say and when I came down in the body of the hall I asked a man for a match. 'A match!' said he; there was a mimicry of the Northern accent: 'If I had a knife handy I'd slit your weazand for you.'"

Everyone there was more or less distinguished in one way or another. There were poets and painters and members of the learned professions and college young women and English and American visitors. Such a gathering in London would have been talking the literary or artistic or musical shop which used to bore me so intolerably. Here they were all talking politics, and nearly all were on the Sinn Fein side. Perhaps there were enough of the others to give a spice to the controversy.

We found that Dublin had many of those reunions of people distinguished in one way or another. The

diversity of guests was amusing. At the house of the wittiest man in Dublin you found on the same garden seat a high Government official, a provincial Lord Mayor fresh from London where the first pourparlers were being exchanged, and everyone hanging on his words: two members of the old National party, one the possessor of an ancient baronetcy, the other the nephew of an English Lord Chancellor. A young man lying on the grass, and carrying an empty sleeve from the War, told you that he was the double of Michael Collins, and seemed immensely proud of it.

There again you caught a phrase or two of conversation: "'What's coming against me,' said he, 'is the fracture I got the year I hunted Galloper when he brought me down at the big fence and crashed on me.' You see, he didn't want to die of anything that wasn't genteel. Since he never was at the Wars it must be the hunting-field. So the doctors humoured him, and never told him it was just a commonality complaint he was dying of."

And—but this was much later on—the venue was at the house of a well-known artist. Trinity College was largely represented there, but the intriguing thing was to see two Ministers of the Dail Eireann Cabinet in converse so close that they could not be detached, with a Member of the Southern Parliament, who had fought against one of the others in 1916.

But that was still far ahead. We drove home from that first Yeats party dodging trees down in the road, as well as the trenches. An amusing thing about the felling of the trees was that thereby the villagers secured their stock of firewood for the winter. In secluded ways, in bridle paths and by field paths, one came across panting villagers dragging branches and portions of the trunks of trees. When you asked them where they got the fine logs they wiped their heated brows and started off into a long conversation designed to distract your attention. Sometimes they were frustrated by the I.R.A., who had

left the trees there for a specific purpose, and ordered to take back what they had annexed to the place from which they had taken it; and when that happened there was much laughter in the villages, as there was when the village boys were taken away by the I.R.A. to dig trenches one night, and by the military next day to fill them in.

My gardener told me that he was haled out of bed one April morning before daybreak by a loud knocking at his door. He is a crusty man, as becomes a gardener, and a very good gardener at that. Your softly-smiling gardener is a deceit.

"'Who's there?' says I.

"'Military.'

"'All right. Wait a minit.'

"Well, in the confusion I knocked the kay out of the door and couldn't find it in the dark, and while I was down on me knees feelin' wid me hands for it they kep' hammerin' at the door till I thought they'd drive it in on me.

"'Glory be to goodness,' says I shoutin', 'will yez have some patience till I find the kay?'

"They stopped bangin' then, an' I found the kay. When I opened the door I seen an officer outside and two soldiers behind him, an' says he: 'Are you Falkner?'

"'I'm not,' says I, 'me name's Leary.'

"'Have you got anyone in the house but yourself?'

"'I've the wife and child.'

"'Have you anything on you to prove that you're Leary and not Falkner.'

"'I've got nothin' on me this minit but me night-shirt,' says I.

"Wid that he began to laugh, and then by the greatest of good luck I remembered a letter from Miss M—— on the dresser sayin' you'd be comin' into Sylvanmount, an' I says: 'Wait a minut: I've got it.'"

"But he barely looked at the letter.

"'I believe ye all right,' he says. 'Sorry for disturbin' ye,' and off he went, still laughin."

Walking about Dublin was a somewhat fearful experience in those days. You never knew when you would walk into an ambush. Of course, the wretched civilians got it in the neck from both sides. One could not help remembering the enthusiastic and cold-blooded young soldier who said: "Civilians! Oh, but from a military point of view civilians are just useless mouths."

Dublin was like a Wild West show. Everyone tried to avoid as far as possible the neighbourhood of the lorry loads of military, Auxiliaries or Black-and-Tans. In a Dublin tram you never knew the moment when you would be ordered to go flat on your face. The spectacle of layers of Dublin citizens along the floors of the tram-cars cannot have been without its comic appeal if anyone had been in the mind to be amused. 'Here, lie flat, can't ye?" shouted a terrified tram-conductor to a portly lady of my acquaintance. It was no use pleading that she could not lie any flatter though he had emphasised the remark by flattening her as much as he could.

"Some people don't seem to take much account of their lives, stickin' up like that an' hendering other people," he said bitterly.

A hold-up in a street like Grafton Street had also its comic as well as its tragic aspects.

"Why *will* you get so near the lorries?" a Judge of the High Court shouted to his chauffeur, and he was a brave man too: "Didn't I tell you always to avoid the lorries?"

I don't think fear kept anyone at home: the bright face of danger had come to be something too common to take much notice of, like the flare-lines in the newspapers.

One turned to look curiously after the wild flight through the streets of a tender containing Black-and-Tans or Auxiliaries. The men were dare-devils. Some of them looked black and forbidding enough, but others were gay and defiant. They sat in the light tenders, revolver in hand, unprotected beyond the knees, and

sometimes they sent laughing glances to the girls on the pavement. One of the last days I was in Dublin before the Truce I looked after a tenderful of them. They were bareheaded, and one, very fair, had his head flung backwards as though he laughed at Death.

In the tenders there was practically no protection. The hen-coops were another matter. They were deep boxes on wheels in which the men were covered to their necks. Over the top was thrown a wire-netting, bomb-proof, which gave the thing the look of a hen-coop.

An old woman in the street was reported to have said as she stood and looked after one of these vehicles:

"Bedad, the Boers put ye in khaki; the Germans put ye in tanks; but it took the Irish to put ye in cages."

One day we went into a Grafton Street tea-shop for tea. It was at the crowded hour of the afternoon and the two outer rooms were full, but there seemed to be vacant places in the third and inner room, or rather division, for the three divisions really made one long room.

The place seemed more subdued than usual, though the tables in the outer divisions were crowded. There was not the usual lively buzz of talk. Of course the day before, or the day before that, a couple of Auxiliaries had been shot just outside the door of the tea-shop, but still people had grown accustomed to such things, as they grew accustomed to the casualty-lists of the War.

We sat down at a corner-table and had time to look about us. Then we discovered that at a centre table against the end wall there sat two Auxiliaries. They were facing the long room. Each had his hand on his revolver, covering the room. With the other hand they conveyed the tea and cake to their mouths.

They sat in full view from the window. If a tyre had burst in the street I don't know what might have happened. It must have been fearfully uncomfortable for the people sitting at the middle tables in the direct line of fire, but no one got up and went.

I was not used to so macabre a tea-drinking, and to me

it was a relief when they finished their tea, got up, and, with their revolvers at full cock, marched down the long room and out.

I said to the waitress, "Is this usual?"

"Oh yes," she said, "we have it every day. They used to lay down their revolvers beside their plates; but now they keep them in one hand."

Going home that same evening, when the train stopped at Stillorgan Station, looking casually out of the window, my attention was arrested by the spectacle of three or four young men, wearing trench coats and black velour hats, passing the carriage-window, with sacks of mails on their shoulders. Professional men, and the sort of aristocracy of Dublin business circles, live in those parts. One noticed the passengers who had alighted standing back against the station wall, leaving a clear space for the young men with the sacks, who passed on up the steps to the bridge.

The train whistled and went out of the station, and then suddenly, under orders, was held up for about a quarter of an hour. The mails had been raided, and we were held up lest the alarm should be given before the raiders had got clear off.

CHAPTER XXX

DREAD AND TERROR

THROUGH all the dread and terror there were human and homely things. The raiding of the letters was a serious inconvenience to persons like myself, since it meant delay sometimes of several days, after which they would come, marked, "Censored, I.R.A.," in blue pencil.

The homely part of it was when I heard Annie complaining:

"Well, if here isn't a letter from my aunt askin' me to tea on Sunday an' now it's Tuesday. I'll let them boys at D—— have it hot when I can get hold of them!"

There was a tall child, the daughter of a Dublin doctor, who, walking in St. Stephen's Green one day, heard a patter as of hail in the pondful of strange foreign birds which is such a fairy pool of delight to the children of the Dublin slums. As usual the place was crowded with the children. As soon as the patter like hail came in the pond and the ducks sent up a great squawking Brenda Gogarty went down flat on her face, and all the other children followed her example. It was rifle-fire. After that the mothers used to say when they sent the children to play in the Green, "If you hear any queer noise you do what Brenda Gogarty did."

An English friend of ours, the daughter of a soldier, "born in the barracks" as she put it, came in one day very angry with the Auxiliaries.

She had gone to post a letter to her mother at a Dublin post-office, and was in the act of affixing the stamp when her attention was attracted to an absurd

incident happening close by. A lorryful of Auxiliaries had drawn up by the pavement. One of them had flung a handful of coppers to an old Dublin street-character, who plays a concertina in the streets about Grafton Street. The old man had hitched up his rags, and with an immense scorn was stepping through the coppers, nose in air, taking care not to touch them.

The other Auxiliaries were roaring with laughter, as were the spectators in the street. She laughed, too, as she turned to drop her letter into the letter-box. Suddenly, her arm was seized from behind and the letter forcibly taken from her hand. She looked into the infuriated face of an Auxiliary—perhaps the one whom the old man had just made ridiculous.

"You are treating His Majesty the King with contempt," he shouted, "turning the stamp upside down!" which she had done inadvertently.

Being an Englishwoman, with the habit of freedom, she flared.

"How dare you!" she said. "Give me back my letter at once."

He tore the letter across and flung it into the gutter. Then he went back to the lorry, which drove away.

A favourite stopping-place of the Crown forces was the Kodak Company's shop in Grafton Street. I have seen there drawn up by the pavement a couple of lorries, a Crossley tender, an armoured car, and two or three Fords. I suppose that pointed in a way to the isolation in which the men lived, that they had to solace themselves with so much photography. But again, if a tyre had burst!

I remember the day we came out of the tea-shop into Grafton Street there were about a dozen Auxiliaries in the street, walking in twos, each with a hand on his revolver, and looking rapidly from side to side. It appeared to be a demonstration against those who had shot their comrades a day or two earlier in the street. It was noticeable that the civilian population gave them

a wide berth. They had the side of the street on which they walked to themselves.

Pat, coming from Cambridge just before the Truce, had as travelling companion a Black-and-Tan who amused him hugely.

The carriage was very crowded, but there was no one who promised any particular interest till the big fellow who had been "pulling the leg" of his plain English-working-men fellow-passengers, suddenly drew a document from his pocket, which he waved in the air.

"'Ere's my passport," he said, "an' I don't care oo sees it! Bless your 'earts, no! I ain't ashamed of it."

He was a new recruit to the Black-and-Tans.

"There!" he went on. "My ole father, 'e always did say as 'ow I'd end a pleeceman. Jolly queer sort of pleeceman I am! It 'ud fair make th' ole man turn in 'is grave if 'e was to know wot sort o' pleeceman."

One of the other passengers said something derogatory to Ireland and Sinn Fein. The Black-and-Tan fixed him with his eye.

"Now, you look 'ere, friend," he said. "You don't be runnin' away with them kind of idears. You 'aven't studied the question. These yere Irish, they've been very badly treated. W'y, if I was an Irishman myself I'd be a Sinn Finer. You ain't looked up 'istory, sonny."

"May I ask, sir," said another passenger, respectfully, "in wot way the Irish 'ave been badly treated?"

"Well, look 'ere, m'lad. There's the matter o' Coal. Ain't Ireland all bogs? It is a well-known proposition that w'ere peat is, there's coal below it. Pots o' money, I should say, under those yere Irish bogs, an' our Government, wot did they ever do to get out that coal? I arsks you, wot did they do? Don't you be runnin' away' m' lad, with that there idear of yours that the Irish 'ave nothink to compline on. In my opinion they 'ave been an ill-treated people."

The third-class carriage listened to him with the deepest respect. The next thing he did was to pull out a letter

from his pocket announcing that it was from his old woman. With that winning confidence in the interest of his hearers which is so touching in simple people—I possess it myself, perhaps—he began to read the letter:

"My dear William,—

"If I was you I'd come 'ome. The childring are getting out of 'and. They need you to correct them.

"Your affectionate wife,

"Mariar."

"Bless 'er 'eart!" he commented, folding up the letter. "Me correct 'em! W'y, I wouldn't be no good at correctin' 'em. They'd laugh at me. Just like their old dad, they are."

Someone then asked him about the discipline of the force, and if the stories concerning the indiscipline were true.

He answered oracularly: "My word, it's stiff now! Not wot it were at first! Discipline 'as to be stern, you see, with a force like ours—a mixed lot, as you might say."

It must have been amusing, to judge by the way Pat gurgled and choked over the recital.

At one of the afternoon parties we went to we met a tall, shy, fair young man who looked like an officer or an ex-officer. He had come with a gay, rather irresponsible young man, English by birth, but hardly by temperament, whom we had met a few days earlier with Lennox Robinson, at Sir Horace Plunkett's: but about the tall, fair boy of military bearing there was something of a mystery. There was an uncertainty even as to his name, for no two people were agreed about it.

As at all such gatherings the room was full of people in sympathy with Sinn Fein—an academic rather than a practical sympathy in a good many instances. But there was one lady whose husband was a well-known member of the Sinn Fein organisation, and to this lady the young man seemed to attach himself, or he was perhaps

too shy to get out of the corner into which he had retired on his first arrival. He was obviously very gentle and sensitive; even when he was spoken to the blood mounted to his cheeks. There was some sort of discussion, a three-cornered discussion, in which Pat took a part. The lady propounded rash theories which Pat demolished, one after the other, mercilessly.

Presently a party of the young people drifted out to the garden, the mysterious youth with them. The conversation included the doings of Black-and-Tans, as every conversation in Ireland was bound to do at that moment. The shy youth said something or other which made Pamela turn to look at him. "Do you belong to the I.R.A.?" she asked. "No . . . not exactly," he stammered, and blushed to the roots of his hair.

He and his irresponsible friend joined us a little later at the railway-station, where we were waiting for our train. We had just been inspected by a military party on the look-out for raiders of the mail, but the late arrivals had missed the exciting episode.

The tall fair boy went to the other side of the station for his Dublin-bound train. The rest of us travelled together. "By Jove," said the youth who had brought him—"imagine if they had searched *him!*"

"Why?" we asked.

"They'd have found a revolver on him, of course."

"So he was in the I.R.A.!"

"No. Didn't you know? He was one of the boyoes?"

"What boyoes?"

"Why, the Black-and-Tans, of course."

It would have been the Auxiliaries: the names were often mixed up. This boy's story was a tragic one. An officer in the regular army, he had come home from India on a year's leave, only to meet the tidings of his father's sudden death which had left his mother ill-provided for. The recruiting for the force which in Ireland came to be known as Tudor's Toughs was in

progress. The pay was tempting. He joined, as he would have joined any other kind of public service, was sent to the West of Ireland, was a witness of some of the excesses of the " new police," was wounded in an ambush and sent to a Dublin hospital, where he would have nothing to do with men of his own cloth and no one else would have anything to do with him. The matron of the hospital had befriended him and had bespoken the friendship for him of the young man who had brought him to the party where he had found himself in such strange company.

The lady of the Sinn Fein husband, on being told the profession of the young man she had taken such a liking to, said sadly :

" Then I suppose I shall never see him again. I don't care whether he is a Black-and-Tan or not. All I know is that he is a charming young man. Of course, I know I was all wrong that day when your boy corrected me, and I know he was in agreement with your boy ; but he was too much of a gentleman to correct a lady, and I shall always like him, no matter what he is."

It was a snub for Pat.

The gay young Englishman was very amusing about his Curfew experiences. Apparently he was always roving about the streets at night, perhaps because he was an Englishman and accustomed to do as he liked. He told us of his experiences ; the tale was something like this. He used to walk home from the Abbey Theatre two or three times a week in Curfew hours, trusting to luck not to be caught. Some of us had seen the streets in Curfew, from a window on a moonlit night. What we saw was the street under the moon—a perfectly empty and soundless perspective. Far away something stirred in the dwindling distance. Something moved by the houses where there was no shadow on a night of full moon. It came furtively, with an air of flattening itself against the wall. Perhaps it was pale daylight, and not moonlight at all. In those Summer-Time nights the

daylight was still on the sky at midnight. The man breaks into a run, making for shelter. The ringing sound of his footsteps echoes and re-echoes. He might be making as much noise as possible to show that he is no conspirator. He remembers that running is dangerous, or perhaps he has heard the rumbling of a tank or the sound of an armoured car. He stops running, looks about him and resumes his loud solitary walk.

"I don't like Nassau Street," says Robin Fawcett, and roars with laughter, "but there are always the police to stand your friends. There isn't a bit of cover all the way down that horrid street, especially with the moon shining. But I can generally pass my friends, the D.M.P., with a wink on either side. Occasionally, of course, they have to do something for their money. One night I was stopped:

"'Ye're out again, without a permit!'

"'I'm afraid I am, Sergeant.' (N.B.—You always address a Dublin police-constable as Sergeant. It is only polite.)

"'It's the third time this week!'

"'I'm afraid it is, Sergeant.'

"'Isn't it a wonder, me fine young fella, that ye wouldn't have *some* consideration for the polis?'

"That was mere camouflage, of course. But one night at a point where I expected to find friends I found strangers. A majestic creature suddenly bore down upon me from the shadows of Kildare Street. I could see another equally majestic form in the background. The following conversation took place between me and Giant No. 1.

"'Have ye a permit?'

"'No,' said I, with chattering teeth, for I felt I was in for it this time.

"'Are ye aware that ye are out in Curfew hours and so contravanin' the Law?'

"Before I could answer his mood changed. He laid a paternal hand on my shoulder.

" ' Ye was chancin' it, me son, just riskin' it like,' he said, almost tenderly.

" ' I was,' said I, hopefully.

" ' Well, well—all Life's riskin' an' chancin'. Just a game o' riskin' it an' chancin' it. Go your ways ! '

" A night or two later I wanted to cross Sackville Street and found it lit from end to end by military searchlights. While I hesitated, hiding in the shadows of Earl Street, I was approached by a Dublin Metropolitan.

" ' It's you, again,' said he.

" ' It is,' said I sadly, ' I can't deny it.'

" ' Wait till the searchlight swings round, an' I'll take ye across,' said he, in a hoarse whisper.

" Unfortunately, the searchlight swung back when we were in the middle of the road. My D.M.P. man immediately adopted the attitude of one who challenges. Not only the attitude but the voice which could be heard two streets off while he dilated on the iniquity of being out in Curfew hours without a permit, demanding my business with all the majesty of the Law. The lights were switched off again.

" ' Run now,' he said—' run like blazes ! You'll find another policeman at the next corner : if the coast isn't clear you stand an' let him talk to ye till it is—the way I was doin'.' "

The man who said to me the other day, while we swopped stories about the police : " It was a shame ever to kill them ! " gave me his experience.

He had entered into possession of a new house, to find on a pantry shelf several rounds of ammunition. It was at the moment when it would be better to be found in possession of an unaccounted-for dead body. No one could imagine how it came there or to whom it belonged. No one would touch the cartridges. The gardener, being invited to take them away, said that he was a married man with children ; the chauffeur said that he had an old mother dependent on him. Of course, they might

have been buried, but since by this time a good many people knew of their existence that might have led to complications.

The local police at this time were living behind sandbags and wire-entanglements and it was safer not to approach the barracks. My friend did the honest and manly thing. He brought the cartridges to a Dublin police station. The Sergeant in charge was as big as a tank.

"Cartridges!" said he, "an' may I ask how you come to be in possession of them cartridges?"

He eyed the parcel where my friend had left it on the counter, with no sign of picking it up.

"I found them in the pantry of my new house when I went into occupation."

"You found them in the pantry of your new house when you went into occupation," repeated the Sergeant solemnly. "That's a quare story to be bringin' me. Who was the owner o' them cartridges?"

"I tell you they've no owner. No one knows how they came to be there."

"Have you by every manes in your power thried to ascertain the owner of them cartridges?"

"Haven't I told you so already?"

"Don't be impatient," said the Sergeant and scratched his chin. "May I ask further what is the purpose for which you've brought me them cartridges?"

"Isn't it the right place to bring them to? I want to hand them over to proper custody."

"If I was you I'd be takin' them to the Island Bridge Barracks."

"I'm not going to carry them all round Dublin. I've carried them farther than I like already."

"Look-a-here!" The Sergeant dropped his official manner and became a man and a brother. He leant his huge bulk across the counter and said in a whisper:

"If I was you I'd just be takin' a walk along be the river an' lane over to have a look at somethin', an' drop

them quietly in. Ye'll be quit o' them then an' no harm done."

"Now look here," said my friend, "I once knew a man who had a suit of clothes so shabby that he was ashamed to offer them to anyone, and so he took a walk by the river and dropped them in. Someone saw him doing it and he was arrested, and I can tell you there *were* complications. They were dragging the river for a week after, and they wouldn't believe when the clothes were found that they could ever have belonged to so respectable a man. He was arrested then for personation and attempted suicide, and only that no clue could be found to the owner of the clothes it would have been murder."

A large grin overspread the Sergeant's face.

"Go on with you now with your humbuggin'," he said. "Now you take away them cartridges. I'm not goin' to lay a hand on them."

"Will you send one of your men with me to see me drop them in the river?"

"I'll do no such a thing. It's not a thing I'd meddle with."

My friend looked at him for a moment, measuring him with his eye.

"Now, look here," he said. "You're a very big man and you move slowly. I'm a small man compared with you, and I'm in training. What's to prevent me doing a bunk down the street and leaving you in possession of the cartridges? You'd never catch me."

A pale shade of anxiety overspread the Sergeant's rubicund face.

"You'd never do as mane a thing as that on me!" he gasped. "Surely to goodness you wouldn't!"

Suddenly he had a happy thought.

"May I ask," he said insinuatingly, "your place of residence?"

My friend gave it unsuspectingly.

The Sergeant's face cleared.

"Sure you're in the Constabulary District," he said. "It is not a case for us at all. Here, take them away wid ye."

My friend saw the game was up. His admission had been an indiscreet one.

"I'd better take them home with me," he said, mournfully. "Of course the Constabulary are no good to me. They haven't been outside the barracks for months and they don't like people coming about the place at all. I might get shot by accident."

"Nothing likelier," said the Sergeant sympathetically. "Them min's jumpy!"

"I've a friend in the Gunners at Athlone. I'll get him to take them."

"Ye couldn't do a better thing. I wonder ye didn't think o' that first instead of carryin' them cartridges about wid ye. Good mornin'! If you was to be arrested wid them in your possession I'd spake for ye."

"Thank you very much, but I'd get shot first," my friend said, taking up the rejected cartridges.

"Ye never said a thruer word," said the Sergeant.

Another friend met an R.I.C. constable, or discovered him one day in the shrubbery near her gate, "playing bears," she called it.

He came out awkwardly, when he saw that she had seen. He was carrying a notebook in his hand.

"I hope I didn't alarm you, Madam, be scoutin'," he said. "They're dangerous times."

She answered that she was not alarmed.

"Are you Mrs. Nelson?"

"Yes."

"Mrs. Honor Nelson."

"That is my name."

He wrote in the notebook with a stubby pencil. He was a tall fair young constable and he was pink to the ears with shyness.

"You are the possessor of a motor-car?"

She acknowledged that she was.

"Under lock and key?"

"The motor-house is locked, of course."

"That motor-car may be a danger to yourself and others, unless kept under careful supervision."

"Oh, I always keep my eye on it," Honor said, forgetting her habit of leaving it in the street unattended.

"It would be a safer thing for you to dismantle that car."

"But how should I get about?" she asked, aghast. "I want it for the Curragh Races three days this week."

"True for you. That didn't occur to me. But if ye couldn't dismantle it, itself, couldn't ye remove some of the vital parts?"

But the days and nights were not all spent in alarums and excursions. Once I went out calling in Dan Healy's cab. Dan is known all over the countryside as a character and a wag. When the daughter of a distinguished specialist was married the other day she disdained all the motors and drove to the church in Dan Healy's cab.

I had engaged him for the afternoon. At the last house but one he climbed cheerily on to his box. "Home now," he said, with a sigh of relief, as though the afternoon had been a very long one.

"Not yet," I said. "There's still Mrs. Mitchell!"

"I'm goin' to drive you home," said he obstinately.

"I'm going to Mrs. Mitchell's," said I.

"I won't take you," said he, firmly. "I've a job at Glengeary at seven o'clock. Just time to drive you home an' get back."

"I'm going to Mrs. Mitchell's," I repeated.

His face cleared with a sudden thought. "I'll take ye there an' lave ye an' come back for ye," he said.

"I'm not going to dine and sleep the night at Mrs. Mitchell's," said I.

The gleam in his face faded. "Ye'll lose me me job," said he, mournfully, "an' th' other man'll get inside me with the gentleman."

"You're wasting time," said I. "I shan't be five minutes."

"Five hours," said he. "I know what ye are wance ye get talkin'."

"I shan't be five minutes," I repeated.

"Well, well," he said, resignedly, and began to turn the horse round about. "Women'll have their way. Why wouldn't ye go another day? She's the seventh to-day."

He turned his old weather-beaten rosy face and looked at me with a new hope. "She might be out," he said. "I thought I seen someone like her goin' up the golf-links a while ago."

"So she might," said I, "but you couldn't know anyone as far away as the golf-links."

"Maybe aye, maybe no," said he oracularly.

He pulled up with a jerk in front of Mrs. Mitchell's house. "You're goin' to get out?" said he, looking round at me.

"No," said I, "you get off and ring and ask if she's at home."

He scrambled off the box and stood looking at me. "Wouldn't it be the grandest thing at all if she wasn't?" said he.

"You'd better ask," I said.

His face when he turned away from the hall-door, where the tall young parlourmaid stood smiling as though she loved me, was a monument of gloom. "She's in," he said. "Musha, why couldn't she be out takin' a walk this lovely evenin'? Now I'm goin' to lose me job and disappoint the gentleman."

"I shan't be five minutes," said I, again.

"Ye think ye won't, but ye'll get talkin'. I might as well put on the horse's nosebag."

It was well under the five minutes when I returned. "Well!" said I. "Did I keep my word?"

"Ye did. If ye didn't, I was goin' to lave ye. It's home now, anyhow."

We drove home cheerfully.

"What am I to give you?" I asked, taking out my purse at my own door.

"As much as ever ye like. The times is hard."

I gave him rather more than he expected. I could see it by the glint of his eye.

"I'm glad I didn't lave ye in the lurch," said he. "Ye're a dacent lady."

"I won't pay you as much as that another time," said I.

"Ye will," said he. "Look at all the talk ye had an' all the tay. I like to be drivin' ye. But all the same if ye hadn't kept yer word to me I'd ha' been late for my job at Glengeary."

CHAPTER XXXI

ALARUMS AND EXCURSIONS

We used to meet all sorts of people as we took our walks through the village and round by the Bride's Glen. Shopping in Ireland is apt to be a long business, for there is so much agreeable conversation. Once I found Miss Josephine in the village shop in a state of dejection. She had backed "Irish Republic" at Leopardstown the day before and had lost more than she could bear to tell me.

"Never mind," I said, "he'll romp home another day, maybe under a new name."

"Sure you had to back him," she said, mournfully, "with his name."

Another day she had a sensational tale of some deserters from an English Regiment who had inadvertently, in a mountain mist, walked into an I.R.A. camp. Miss Josephine has large dark blue eyes which open enormously when she has a tale to tell.

"So, when they seen where they were, one o' them says to the other, 'Glory be to God, boys,' he says, 'we're in a thrap. It's the I.R.A.!'" The 'A' with the Latin sound common in Ireland.

Another day I found Miss Josephine talking to a lady in black, evidently a Protestant and engaged in farming pursuits. They were discussing the slump in the price of pigs, each capping the other's terrible experience of the fall in prices. They were going to eat their pigs instead of selling them.

It was one of the lovely Autumn mornings of 1921.

"The world's upside down," said the Protestant lady. "Have you seen the tree in the New Village, with

apples on it, well formed? The fig-tree has come into leaf. When that happens out of its time the Judgment is at hand. All the signs are that the end of the world's approaching."

Josephine burst into a groan. There are many reasons why Josephine should be well-pleased with the world as it is.

"If it's the end of the world," I put in, "what's the use of bothering about pigs?"

The farming lady turned round and looked at me.

"We'd maybe get time to eat one or two before that," she said, with a grin.

The shopkeepers have the most engaging way of going off to another house in search of something they are in need of, leaving you in charge.

"If the 'phone rings maybe you wouldn't mind answering it," they say.

An old woman whose son was formerly in the Dublin Fusiliers stopped me one day to ask what chance there was of the prisoners getting out. He was serving a term of imprisonment for a raid upon a police-barracks.

"My son also was in the Dublin Fusiliers," I say.

"See that now! But your son would be a General."

One goes a bit of the way with various people. If you come up with a group of children going your way they line up either side of you chattering like young birds in the nest as you go along. They are beautiful children and *au fond* little ladies and gentlemen. You need never fear that they will be troublesome. They will part from you as soon as you are willing that they should. Meantime they entertain you with stories of the village happenings.

Again you walk a bit of the way with a very fine and stately gentleman who is an ex-Resident Magistrate. He belongs to the Old Order and is very sad about the New. He was once an R.I.C. officer. You say something about the Black-and-Tans and he winces. "Ah, the Black-and-Tans," he says, and it is easy to conjecture

what he is thinking of. The old R.I.C. was one of the finest bodies of men in Europe, and very typically Irish. He thinks the old comfortable, easy-going Ireland we knew is all gone, yet it is to his hand, if he but knew it.

Again it is a priest much beloved by the people, among whom he does a deal of social work, and much approved by the philanthropic Protestants. He stops to tell you a story of the Volunteer Police. That is in the Bride's Glen, where the little river runs and chatters over its stony bed and slips round boulders and forms deep amber-coloured pools. The Bride's Glen is an innocent place. Nothing was ever hurt there but the tall young trees, of which only a trunk remains in many instances. The War has sadly disfigured the Bride's Glen.

Three or four donkeys scamper down the hill-side and come to have their noses stroked; and the friendly cottage-dogs ramble a bit of theway with you.

One evening last Summer, as we crossed the bridge under overhanging trees in the Bride's Glen, we saw a young man sitting on the parapet of the bridge apparently waiting. That night the bridge was trenched deeply.

Next day when we came that way we found a big motor-car with a couple of mechanics working at it. It had dashed into the trench. Since the bridge did not give way the big motor fared better than a smaller one would have done probably.

The trench was not too wide to leap across. We went on to find the road through the Glen blocked by trees. One was a cherry-tree, one of the last remaining of a cherry orchard which gave the big country house at the bottle-neck of the Glen its name of Cherry-Tree House. We were sorry for the cherry-tree, cut down with the sap flowing in it, but we noticed that it was not a tree, but the sprawling limb which had grown nearly as great as the parent tree, so that perhaps someone else had had ruth for the cherry-tree.

As we passed out of the Glen we saw a number of R.I.C. men and Black-and-Tans alighting from a lorry.

A party of them went into the Glen, inspected the felled trees and the trenched bridge and went off again.

That was lovely weather. Above the Glen we sat on stumps of some felled trees and looked across the Glen and talked, and we were joined, as we always were, by the donkeys—the four of them, and two deliciously young, with innocent furry faces—and a couple of absurd half-bred dogs from the nearest cottages, and a cow who used to come as close beside us as she might and drop with a sigh of deepest content beside us. She was a pet cow, one of the sort that is said to rear the children, but when we saw her by her own cottage door, with the children playing about her as she stood and chewed the cud, she looked at us with absolute unrecognition.

We sat on the edge of a little promontory, dropping sharply to the Glen. While we talked someone drew himself up by his hands and looked at us through a green bush. After that we got up and went home thoughtfully, to the disappointment of the friendly beasts. It was not safe to be talking in those days where you could possibly be overheard.

Quite a number of motor-cars had been "held up" in the Glen that beautiful summer evening, held up with great politeness by the Volunteer young men, who apologised for the inconvenience caused. Since there was no time to get back to their Dublin garages before Curfew the polite young officer of Volunteers commandeered beds for the ladies in the surrounding houses. The men had to sleep as best they could in their cars, and indeed it was no great hardship in such weather to sleep and wake to the singing of birds and waters in the Bride's Glen.

One of the most dramatic adventures of that time, or perhaps it was in the Winter, happened to a young gentleman whom we shall call Peter, since the protagonist was Paul. Peter told the story very well, sitting by a comfortable fire in a comfortable room, some four months after the Truce had been arranged.

The first incident in it was that Peter's Major went into a certain guardroom where the picture of a much-wanted gunman was displayed on the wall, with a big price on his head.

"Hello," he said, "that's my adjutant, L—— I wouldn't have believed it of the fellow, but one never knows with you Irish."

Saying, he passed on cheerfully, but it was only later that Peter was aware of the incident, happily for his peace of mind.

A little later Peter was caught motoring without a permit, and was taken off to another military guard-room while the thing was looked into. He found there, sitting by the fire, a newly captured Sinn Fein prisoner. They talked and Peter said afterwards that he was a very good fellow. They discussed the ethics of the situation, each stating his point of view, and this went on till Peter was told he might go home.

The prisoner with whom he had talked so freely made his escape later, and then Peter began to wonder if he had been prudent in learning so much about the other's views, which had been expressed very candidly, and in that long conversational *tête-à-tête* which had made his face so well known to Peter. For he was really a prisoner of considerable importance, although he had managed to hoodwink his guards, and it might be a very serious matter to be able to identify him.

So when, one night, there was a rat-tat on the hall door, Peter had a shrewd suspicion as to who his visitors might be. He called to the man-servant, an old soldier, to open the door only on the chain, and he himself followed him down the stairs.

There was a mob of men on the doorstep. As Peter looked out, still with the chain on the door, a big fellow outside whispered—

"For God's sake let me in. I'm Maguire."

Peter immediately slammed-to the door. He knew now who his visitors were and was certain of their

intentions. There was no one in the house but himself, his mother and the servants.

He went to the telephone and rang up the nearest police station. There was no answer. He tried to get at other people with the same result. Then he realised that the wires had been cut.

Meanwhile, the knocking at the door continued stealthily. It was not wise to keep *Them* waiting, so after a brief consultation with his mother it was decided that he should make his escape by means of a trap-door on to the roof from which he could get into some neighbouring house.

Before he could put this plan completely into operation —he was still on the roof—there came a whistle from his mother, the signal, in the secret family code, that the coast was clear—all well.

With immense relief Peter descended from his chilly situation on the roof to find his mother's drawing-room crowded with Black-and-Tans who were all behaving very nicely.

His relief was short-lived. After the Black-and-Tans had been refreshed and had made themselves very agreeable, the one who seemed to be the leader said:

"You are coming with us now, Mr. S——"

"But I'm not Mr. S——" said Peter, bewildered. "My name is L—— You are making a mistake."

"Come along now, Mr. S—— The game's up, we've been looking for you for some time. We've got you now, though you were too wily to let us in when we pretended to be Shinners."

So, amid the hysterics of his mother, Peter was forcibly removed in the lorry and brought to the guard-room of a certain barracks, where he was confronted with Paul's photograph, while a group of his captors stood round and compared his features with Paul's. He acknowledged that there was a likeness, while protesting that he had served during the War and that his name was not S—— but L——. The Black-and-Tans only gibed at him,

telling him cheerfully that he was not going to slip them again, as he would be shot in the morning.

At last Peter fell dumb. It was no use saying he was Peter and not Paul, since they would not believe him. Just at the moment of his worst despair, to his incredulous delight, he saw his old commanding officer enter the guard-room. He was only passing through it, but Peter intercepted him. The Colonel did not seem to have recognised him.

"Oh, sir, don't you remember me?" he gasped. "I am L——"

There was a dead silence. The Colonel looked at Peter with icy coldness.

"I remember you very well," he said. "You called yourself L—— then. I understand you are Mr. S—— now." And he disappeared.

Peter was in worse case than ever. However, it was permitted to him in the morning to call evidence of his identity, and his life was saved, but it was a narrow squeak, and all because of a chance likeness.

I don't suppose that Peter, compared with the photograph of another person, carried himself with half the aplomb of Michael Collins, compared feature by feature with his own photograph. Whatever he did the officer who had arrested him said after the lingering scrutiny:

"Well, you are like him, but you are not he. I've made a mistake," and let him go.

Here is an adventure which befell a friend of mine when she was asked by relations to spend a quiet week at their country house during their absence.

The letter ran: "Sir William and I are going to London for Jack's wedding. Do leave all your cares—let the house and the husband and the babies and the servants do without you for one good week. There are all the new books and magazines; there is the garden in full glory. The servants will love to have you. You will only hear the singing of the birds. It will be perfect rest."

It was just what Frances needed. She was a bit overdone, and Tom was determined she should not lose the chance, so off she went.

The night was very still at Glencurra. Now and again she was conscious in her sleep of distant reverberations, but Glencurra was sunk in deep peace. The garden was lovely. It was very dry weather and the smell of the heavy dews on the dry earth filled her room all night. She slept like a lamb. Overnight she had selected the books she was going to read, but of course she wouldn't read them in a month.

She awoke to much talking, male talking, under her window. She looked out on the lawn and the dew-drenched garden. It was very early, and everything had the strange unreal look of the early morning. But the Black-and-Tans in the garden were real enough. There were about twenty of them, and they were setting about making their breakfasts.

A little later they were knocking quietly at the door, and she opened to them, for the servants would not. They asked civilly enough for boiling water.

"You must get it for yourselves," she said. "The servants will probably refuse to do anything for you. No one is up yet. But if you will go to the kitchen door I will let you in."

The Black-and-Tans cooked their own breakfasts. The cook was in hysterics upstairs and the other servants behind locked doors. Whether they were afraid of the Black-and-Tans, or afraid of serving them, she did not ask; and the Black-and-Tans, having had their breakfasts, departed.

A little later came news of a big round-up in the village.

Some time in the sleepy golden afternoon there came a tremendous knocking at the green garden-gate, which opened on the private road to the village. None of the servants would open the gate, so Frances herself went. There was a chain on the gate and, having fastened it,

she opened just wide enough to admit four revolvers with four masked faces behind them.

"We want the motor-car," said the spokesman. "You needn't be frightened. We shall do you no harm."

She lied boldly.

"The car is not here."

"It is in the garage. We know it is. Let us in."

"There is no petrol."

"We know exactly how much petrol you've got."

"It is a Daimler and you won't know how to drive it."

"We've brought a Daimler driver. We shall return the car by ten o'clock to-night."

"Uninjured?"

"Uninjured. Let us in. There's no time for talking."

She took the chain off the door and let them in.

"You needn't break the lock of the garage," she said. "I'll give you the key, if you'll give me your word of honour as Irishmen to return the car uninjured by ten o'clock. I, on my part, will give my word of honour not to raise the alarm nor let anyone else raise it."

She had a sudden thought.

"It's not for the purpose of killing anyone?" she said.

"It is to save a life, not to take one," answered the spokesman, who had the voice and speech of an educated man, "I give you my word of honour for that."

"Very well, you can have the car. Perhaps you had better give me a receipt for it.

"That is only reasonable, Madam."

She brought them into the house and Sir William's study, where they gave her the receipt. While they wrote it she said, "I wish you would not wear those masks. You've no idea how absurd you look."

Off came two of the masks. A couple of shy, country-boy faces giggled embarrassedly at her.

There was a moment of alarm when one of the men who had remained masked suggested taking her with them.

"Only in case we met a military patrol, Madam," said the spokesman politely. "We should have to ask you to say that it was all right."

However they thought better of it and went off without her and with the key of the garage. A few minutes later she heard the Daimler go off. It was reported by the chauffeur, who had watched from a distance, that he had never seen a car better handled.

Frances was only just in time to stop the butler telephoning to the police. She locked up the telephone for the day. "After all," she said, "I don't know my position, of course, but I had given them my word of honour."

"There were just six hours till ten o'clock," she said, "and all those hours I was thinking of Sir William's Daimler. It was three minutes to ten o'clock when I heard the joyful sound of its return. A little later the key was handed in by one of the country-boys.

"The man who spoke for us this morning, Ma'am," he said, "bid me to thank you and to tell you that no harm came to anybody. The car only helped a man to escape."

"They might have walked into the arms of the police," said Frances, "but they never seemed to doubt my word of honour. The car was absolutely uninjured. We heard next day that a very important person had escaped. But wasn't it a nice beginning to my quiet week?"

But the Terror was never brought home to me so vividly as it was the night before this page was written, when some neighbours were dining with us. They had had this adventure the night before the Truce. The village must have been aware of it with others, yet we, a quarter of a mile from the house, only heard of it nearly five months afterwards.

The lady was awakened by her husband saying very gently—he would be gentle under all circumstances—

"My dear, I am sorry to disturb you, but I'm afraid you are in the line of fire."

She said sleepily: "What fire? I don't want to get up."

A perfect fusillade of shots rang out, and in the intervals voices of men and shuffling footsteps were audible below the windows.

"Why, they are in the garden," she said, and came awake fully to the realisation of the fact that she had a soldier sleeping under her roof.

I may mention that the house is of the villa description, built for the old safe Ireland in which you need never lock your doors or hasp your windows: the front of the house was mainly glass, and the builder had not dreamt of such a superfluity as shutters. There was no chance of standing a siege.

The bullets rattled on the roof and tumbled in the balcony. She slid out of bed and crept to a sheltered place. The revolver shots rattled again, and then there was cessation. They heard the voices and footsteps going off in the direction of the garage.

"They wanted to put the wind up in us while they took the motor," said the sleepy man, and went back to bed again, murmuring that he was not the kind of man to interfere with men with revolvers.

His wife said that he was asleep before he had finished the remark. He had not seemed to remember the soldier in the house for the week-end.

There was a girl visitor also in the house. The hostess put on a dressing-gown and slippers and ran down to her friend's room. Neither was in the least minded for sleep again. They decided to make tea in the true feminine fashion. While they were about it the soldier arrived fully dressed.

"They've come for me," he said. "I thought I'd better be ready."

While they were drinking tea the fusillade began again. Bullets rained on the house-front and whizzed

on the windows. The host, fully wakened up now, arrived and they had a hasty council. As the shots were coming on every side of the house there was no chance of escape. The only thing they could think of was to put the soldier in one of the few rooms that could be locked.

One of them looked at his watch. It was a quarter to three.

"Most of these things have been done at a quarter to three," said the soldier, cheerfully.

While they were hustling him into the lockable room the fusillade suddenly ceased. They listened with strained attention. They heard the loud voices and the footsteps going away again.

For a time they did not dare to move. But as time went on and all was quiet the two men ventured to explore. The lower portion of the house was quiet. The garden lay still in the faint light of a young moon. By six o'clock they thought it safe to go back to bed again.

The explanation came a little later. There had been a body of Black-and-Tans guarding the house of a resident who had been warned to leave the country as quickly as possible and was in the process of doing it. They took it into their heads to "shoot up" some fowl, and had been pursuing the frightened creatures far afield. Irish fowl are much more of wild-fowl than the comfortable English variety. The fowl had found covert in our neighbours' shrubbery.

But—that no one should have troubled to mention the fact! That was eloquent. We did remember that the host had said to one of us casually on Truce Day, "Did you hear the shooting last night?" and had been interrupted before proceeding further with the tale.

And this brings me to the mysterious nights of Terror in Dublin during the month before the Truce. The fusillade began usually about midnight and lasted on and off till daylight.

The one of us who heard the first of these Curfew

battles, as they came to be called, she having stayed the night with a friend just outside Dublin, says that the battle began at eleven o'clock, lasted for about an hour, and went on at intervals till about three o'clock. It began with rifle fire and went on to machine-gun fire, the bursting of bombs and revolver fire. She thought at first that the battle was in the next field, but it proved to be much farther away than that—somewhere in the heart of Dublin, where various buildings were found afterwards to be pitted with bullet-marks. There was a deafening din while the battle went on; when it ceased it seemed as though every dog in Dublin was barking hysterically, and there was a great noise of vehicles being driven at breakneck pace.

Next morning the master of the house—a soldier—said that to his ear the noise of the machine-guns betokened their being fired in a confined space. That day the reticence which had fallen over one of the most talking cities in the world was lifted. Everyone in trams and public conveyances was exchanging experiences of the uncanny happening, and people who had never spoken to each other before were excitedly asking each other what it could mean.

Pamela had the same experience on another night, a little later, but this time the household was up and sitting round the fire, which had been lit for a rainy evening. Their talk was broken into by the sharp crackle and patter of machine guns, the bursting of bombs, all the noise and tumult of War.

These mysterious battles went on night after night. No one ever knew, to my knowledge, what they meant or where they took place, and in the strange upheaval, in which one wild happening succeeded and blotted out another, they were soon forgotten. The Curfew covered them at the time and with the coming of the Truce they sped into oblivion.

Now that people can talk, you do not obtain very much. You say to them: "You must have had a terrible

time last Winter," and they answer: "Oh yes, a terrible time!" but they have no further information to give. Their minds are upon what is happening to-day, or they are still deafened—bothered, which is the Irish equivalent for deafness—by the noise and tumult of that fierce Winter.

CHAPTER XXXII AND LAST

THE TRUCE

We were sitting on the lawn one Sunday in June, 1921—it was the last Sunday, the 26th—with a group of friends having tea, when a lorry-load of Black-and-Tans drew up outside our boundary hedge and peered above it at our friendly gathering.

A little earlier, just as some of our friends were arriving, the same lorry-load had paused at the lodge-gate—like most houses of its period Sylvanmount has a consequential little avenue, a gravel sweep big enough to turn a coach-and-four and a gate-lodge—with an apparent intention of entering. Whereupon our visitors had gone on pretending that they were not for us.

However, after that inspection, the Black-and-Tans apparently decided not to raid us and went on. Then some of the Dublin visitors announced calmly the fateful news: Mr. Lloyd George had invited Mr. de Valera to a conference.

When the Truce was announced it was as though the heart of Ireland had lifted under her green bosom. The loneliness passed from the late fields. The strange pathetic air of suffering, patiently borne, which had lain on the country-side; the golden evening had been as though a smile shone on the face of the dead—was lifted. One only realised what the country had borne by the enormous revulsion to joy. Why all that laughter! —it was because one must laugh or die.

The spectacle of the patient crowds waiting all day outside the Mansion House during the deliberations, now praying, now laughing, now in tense silence, again

listening to the cheerful urchins who, squatted on some post of vantage, relieved the waiting by singing "Kevin Barry" or "The Bould Black-and-Tans" was not to be forgotten. One remembered the "decent, sober and serious crowd" that followed Lord Fitzwilliam to the water-side in Lady Sarah Napier's Letters, when that betrayal of Ireland, which was but a link in a long chain, was ratified in the recall of the Viceroy who had come with the Charter of the Irish Catholics in his hand.

Future historians will not forget the wild applause that greeted the arrival at the Mansion House of Sir Nevil Macready on foot, unarmed and unguarded. I have heard that generous applause deplored, but it was by people of colder blood than the Irish Celts. The Irish imagination will always rise to courage and trust. If our rulers could only have realised that noble fact long ages ago!

I would give much to have known what went on inside General Macready's mind and heart at that moment.

I have often heard it said that the Irish are too ready to forgive. It is a noble failing.

We were, just about the time of the Truce, suffering a serious—what threatened to be a calamitous—drought. In some places the cattle had to be driven ten miles to water, and the flocks were dying in the fields.

But all trouble was forgotten in the immense uplift of the Truce. A little earlier we had gone to stare at the amazing sight of Bray Police Barracks and the adjoining Royal Hotel, which had been taken over by the military, all deaf, dumb and blind behind the barbed-wire entanglements, the sand-bags, the steel shutters, with one loophole. One conjectured the men sitting in there in the darkness. It was the same all over the place. Little wonder if they went savage.

But now there was a releasing and a trooping-forth of all the prisoners. From Dublin Castle men came forth who had been inside those gates for long, taking what air and exercise they might get in "The Pound," that

dreary garden where they buried temporarily the bodies of those who had died within the precincts of Dublin Castle in Easter Week, 1916. The Pound, gloomy before, must then have gained a sinister and terrible association for those prisoners.

One imagined them coming out with pale prisoners' faces. Everybody was turning to the light. The detested Curfew was gone. During the Great Summer it was a terrible hardship for the poor in Dublin slums to be shut up within-doors, in the long evenings, debarred from the air and the society of the streets. Those verminous, rat-infested, foul, reeking tenements of Dublin, where so strangely the soul survives all the outward pollution—for the Dublin slums do not house criminals—must have been terrible those hot nights.

Carnival befell Dublin on Truce Night, and many nights after, as it befell London on Armistice Night. Our part in the outward rejoicings was to lean from our windows to see the bonfires, and to listen to the laughter and singing from the village that went on into the small hours for at least a week. When a sergeant and two constables of the R.I.C. came down the high road, walking in the middle of the street, and smartly saluted, we stared as though we had seen trees as men walking. They were old friends from the days before all the bitterness had come on the world, not the new police.

The soldiers were out with their bicycles staring at the rejoicings, sometimes taking part in them. We were told that in Dublin the Black-and-Tans danced round the bonfires in the side streets above which hung suspended their own effigies till the Liaison Officer on the Sinn Fein side bade the effigies to be taken down.

The new police were apparently as little popular with the military as with the old police. I was told that a lorry-load of soldiers pulled up to look on at the merry-making on a certain Dublin open space, where the sellers of gingerbread and apples were out, with booths of many kinds and all the fun of the fair because the blessed

Truce had come. A group of children were dancing round a bonfire singing:

"God made the woman,
God made the man:
But the Divil himself
Made the Black-and-Tan."

The soldiers were delighted with the ditty, and bought out all the sweetstuff to reward the children before going on their way.

The Black-and-Tans drove through Dublin on their way to bathe, carrying their bathing things and waving Sinn Fein flags. They put up their heads from the hen-coops calling out "Kamerad" to the people as they passed. And everyone laughed. The Terror was over.

The soldiers also carried Sinn Fein flags on their lorries and waved them at the people, who grinned responsively: and the Truce was only a day or two old when my young people bathing beheld the spectacle of three huge R.I.C. men—the old, not the new police—toying delicately with the waves—that is to say, putting in one large toe and withdrawing it hastily, to the amusement of the spectators; after which they did ring-a-ring-o'-roses hand in hand in the water, splashing each other, and dipping for all the world like the French bourgeois at the seaside, making absolutely no attempt to swim.

On the happy days of the Truce I end my tale. Never was so happy a country, and to add to the happiness, very soon after the long drought broke and the lovely soft rain came down just in time to save the harvest, and all the people were out in it in their bare heads, lifting their faces to Heaven to catch the sweet wet rain, and the grass was coming to life and the beasts feeding and all the ditches running with water.

AFTERWORD

SIX MONTHS after this book was finished I take it up again in such amazing circumstances for Ireland, that I feel some revision of the happy anticipation upon which I ended is unfortunately necessary. I have thought it well to withdraw certain views and judgments which seemed well-founded at that time, but now seem less well-founded. This has entailed the withdrawal, or at least postponement, of certain chapters which dealt seriously with the phases of the Irish struggle up to the time of the Truce. They will be more in their place in another volume perhaps, but at the moment of writing (May, 1922) Ireland is more than ever in the melting-pot, and what is to emerge from it God only knows. I make this statement to anticipate the critic who might say that I jested while a dearer Rome was burning. The Irish always jest even though they jest with tears. Instead of ending at a happy moment I end at the saddest; but Hope is at the bottom of the Pandora's box of Irish troubles, and I believe proudly and firmly in the ultimate destinies of my country.

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